

# A HISTORY OF INFANT EDUCATION

ROBERT R. RUSK

A HISTORY OF  
INFANT EDUCATION

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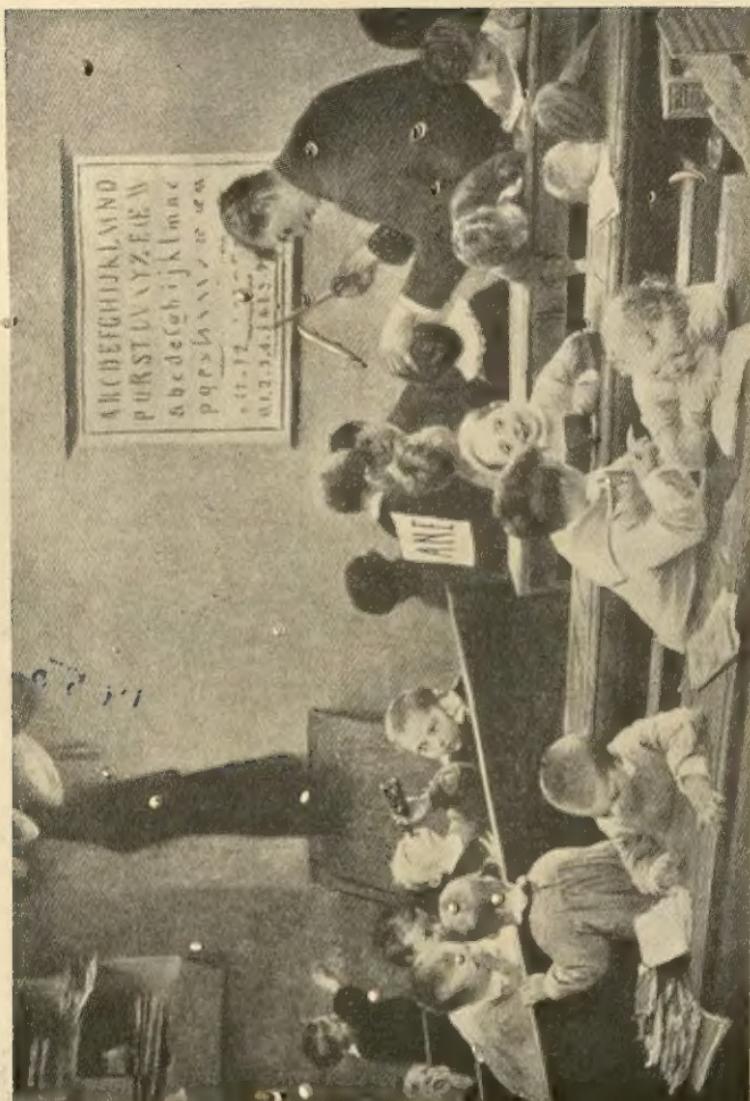
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THE INFANT SCHOOL.  
From a painting by Jean Geoffrey. Reproduced by permission of the Museum and Art Gallery Committee of the Corporation of Birmingham.

# A HISTORY OF INFANT EDUCATION

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WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

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## PREFACE.

HAD Mr. David Salmon proposed to revise and reissue his *Infant Schools: Their History and Theory*, the preparation of this work would not have been undertaken. But since the appearance of Mr. Salmon's pioneer production, much new information has come to hand regarding the history of Infant Schools, some of it the result of his own researches, and it is deemed advisable to make this available.

This work is somewhat more extensive in scope than Mr. Salmon's, as it includes the views on Infant Education of the great educators.

Several acknowledgments are due for the illustrations : to the Birmingham Art Gallery for permission to reproduce "The Infant School"; to Dr. R. F. Young and the Amsterdam Art Gallery for the portrait of Comenius which serves as the frontispiece of Dr. Young's *Comenius in England*; to the Trustees and Director of the National Gallery of Scotland for Allan Ramsay's portrait of Rousseau; to the late Miss Mayo for the miniature in oils of Pestalozzi handed to her father, Dr. Mayo, in 1822 by Pestalozzi himself, and here reproduced for the first time; to Mr. Claude Claremont, of the Montessori Training College, Rosslyn Hill, London, for the photograph of Madame Montessori; and to Professor Dewey for a copy of his own portrait.

The reproduction of Oberlin is from the frontispiece of *Brief Memorials of J. F. Oberlin*, by the Rev. Thomas Sim, published by James Nisbet, London, in 1830; that of Princess Pauline is by the courtesy of Archivrat Kiewning, in whose monumental work, *Fürstin Pauline zur Lippe*, it appears; Robert Owen is from a painting by W. H. Brooke in the Scottish National Portrait Gallery, Edinburgh; James Buchanan and Samuel Wilderspin are from reproductions supplied by Mr. David Salmon—the former also appearing as the frontispiece to the *Buchanan Family Records*. The portrait of David Stow is from an oil-painting by John Graham Gilbert, now in Jordanhill Training College, Glasgow; and Claus Meyer's "Kleinkinderschule in Ueberlingen" is by permission of the Director of the Badische Kunsthalle, Karlsruhe.

The writer is again indebted to Dr. J. C. Jessop, Head Master, Lossiemouth School, for reading the proofs.

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## INTRODUCTION

Most of the active reformers of education in the past, it is frequently claimed, have stressed the importance of the earliest years of childhood. Dewey,<sup>1</sup> for instance, in *The Schools of To-Morrow*,<sup>1</sup> declares that all educational reformers have rightly insisted upon the importance of the first years. This is not universally true. Plato, Aristotle and Quintilian undoubtedly devoted attention to early childhood, but Cicero dealt with training in oratory only after the pupil's general education was completed. Elyot, in *The Goverour*, the first work on education written and printed in English,<sup>2</sup> professes to deal with the best form of education or the bringing up of noble children from their nativity.<sup>3</sup> The section<sup>4</sup> on the order of learning that a nobleman should be trained in before he comes to the age of seven years is as follows:

Some old authors hold opinion that, before the age of seven years, a child should not be instructed in letters; but those writers were either Greeks or Latins among whom all doctrine and sciences were in their maternal tongues; by reason whereof they saved all that long time which at these days is spent in understanding perfectly the greek or latin. Wherefore it requireth now a long time to the understanding of both. There-

<sup>1</sup> P. 67.

<sup>2</sup> Everyman's Library edition, p. 15.

<sup>3</sup> Pp. 21-3. The spelling is here modernised.

<sup>4</sup> 1531.

## INTRODUCTION

fore that infelicity of our time and country compelleth us to encroach somewhat upon the years of children, and especially of noblemen, that they may sooner attain to wisdom and gravity than private persons, considering, as I have said, their charge and example, which, above all things, is most to be esteemed. Notwithstanding, I would not have them enforced by violence to learn, but according to the counsel of Quintilian, to be sweetly allureth thereto with praises and such pretty gifts as children delight in. And their first letters to be painted or limned in a pleasant manner; wherein children of gentle courage have much delectation. . . . But there can be nothing more convenient than by little and litte to train and exercise them in speaking of latin; informing them to know first the names in latin of all things that cometh in sight, and to name all the parts of their bodies; and giving them somewhat that they covet or desire, in most gentle manner to teach them to ask it again in latin. And if by this means they may be induced to understand and speak latin, it shall afterwards be less grief to them in a manner to learn anything where they understand the language wherein it is written. . . . But to return to my purpose, it shall be expedient that a nobleman's son in his infancy have with him continually only such as may accustom him by little and little to speak pure and elegant latin. Similarly the nurses and other women about him, if it be possible, to do the same; or, at the least way, that they speak none English but that which is clean, polite, perfectly and artikulately pronounced, omitting no letter or syllable as foolish wen often times do of a wantonness, whereby diverse noblemen and gentlemen's children . . . have attained corrupt and foul pronunciation.

After that a child is come to seyen years of age . . . the most sure counsel is, to withdraw him from all company of women, and to assign him a tutor, whi sh should be an ancient and worshipful man.

Such is Elyot's advice, from which it may be inferred that he did not concern himself much about the earliest years of childhood.

## INTRODUCTION

The Jesuits, in spite of popular misconceptions, avowedly restricted themselves to higher education.<sup>1</sup>

Ascham, in *The Scholemaster*,<sup>2</sup> as is evident even from the sub-title, disclaims any intention of dealing with infant education; the sub-title runs :

Or plain and perfect way of teaching children, to understand, write and speak, in Latin tongue, but specially purposed for the private bringing up of youth in gentlemen and noble men's houses, and commodious also for all such as have forgot the Latin tongue, and would, by themselves, without a schoolmaster in short time, and with small pains, recover a sufficient ability to understand, write, and speak Latin.

He also declares that he leaves the care of the child before he enters school for the purpose of learning Latin "to wise and good parents, as a matter not belonging to the schoolmaster," and thus evades the task of prescribing an education for the young child.

Milton, in his *Tractate on Education*,<sup>3</sup> ignores education given earlier than the twelfth year. He explains that for brevity's sake he omits "beginning as some have done from the cradle, which yet might be worth many considerations."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Company of Jesus was formed in 1534, and the Society was approved by the Pope in 1540.

Professor T. Corcoran, S.J., kindly confirmed the above statement in a private letter to the author, remarking : "The average age of transit from the European Vernacular schools to the Jesuit—or other—Latin and Greek schools may be put at 10 years, for some 300 years before the Revolutionary Epoch. Formal Classical Instruction ended about 16 years of age: and the *Ratio*, as well as the *Constitutions* that preceded it, was ever emphatic in not having more than five successive classes in Literature. The normal period for a class was one year. Hence those under 9 or 10 years of age were not to be found anywhere or at any time in Jesuit schools, as a recognised element in school population."

<sup>2</sup> 1570.

<sup>3</sup> 1641.

<sup>4</sup> A reference to John Dury's letter of January 6, 1642, to Sir Cheney Culpeper. See R. F. Young, *Comenius in England*, p. 73.

## INTRODUCTION

Locke, in *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*,<sup>1</sup> asserts that the principal aim of his discourse is how a young gentleman should be brought up from his infancy. The type of pupil Locke had in mind, delineated later by Gainsborough in "The Pink Boy," and "The Blue Boy," makes his prescriptions of little general application; these, he suggests,<sup>2</sup> "might all be dispatched in this one short rule, viz. That Gentlemen should use their children, as the honest farmers and substantial yeomen do theirs." Locke also argues in favour<sup>3</sup> of home education against school education,<sup>4</sup> and if the state of the English public schools was no better in his day than it was a century later, his advice was doubtless sound. For our purpose, only his remarks on child-study, of which he, and not Rousseau, might be said to be the father, redeem his work from being quite worthless. His psychological insight leads him to emphasise the importance of first impressions and early habits<sup>5</sup>; the danger of acquired fears<sup>6</sup>; the value of curiosity, and the right of the child to have his inquiries seriously treated and reasonably answered.<sup>6</sup>

Coming to later times we may single out Herbart as an educator who in his writings almost completely ignores early childhood.

The reason for this neglect by the writers cited is not far to seek. They represented the aristocratic tradition in education.<sup>7</sup> The type of child they had in mind is one whose

<sup>1</sup> 1693.

<sup>4</sup> § 130.

<sup>2</sup> § 4.

<sup>5</sup> § 115.

<sup>3</sup> § 70.

<sup>6</sup> § 118.

<sup>7</sup> The Jesuits are aristocratic only in the educational sense that they restricted themselves to higher education, as there was a rigorous basic rule from 1540 to 1773 against any fees for any classes and against a College deriving any surplus revenue from any Boarding House.

## INTRODUCTION

early education was conducted at home by a governess or tutor. Mulcaster<sup>1</sup> penned the same complaint<sup>2</sup>:

Those ancient writers, who have depicted ideal commonwealths, and have imagined the upbringing of such paragons as should be fitted for a place in them, before asking when their youth should begin to learn, have commonly laid down the conditions of their training from a very early stage. They begin by considering how to deal with the infant while he is still under his nurse, discussing whether he should be nursed by a stranger or by his mother, what playfellows should be chosen for him while he is still in the nursery, and what exquisite public or private training can be devised for him afterwards. These and other considerations they fall into, which do well beseem the bringing up of such an one as may indeed be wished, though scarcely hoped for, but can by no means be applied to our youth and our education, wherein we wish for no more than we can hope to have. Nay, these writers go further, as mere wishers may, and appoint the parents of this so perfect a child, to be so wise and learned that they may indeed fit into an ideal scheme, but too far surpass the model that I can have in view. Wherefore leaving on one side these ideal measures and people, I mean to proceed from such principles as our parents do actually build on, and as our children do rise by to that mediocrity which furnisheth out this world, and not to that excellence which is fashioned for another.

When these writers deign to mention the education of children not belonging to the privileged class, it is merely to impose on them a ~~prq~~ nature vocational training. In the *Republic* Plato deals at length with the early education of the children who were later to be governors in the ideal state; it was a humanistic education, as one would naturally infer, and the children of the artisans were not per-

<sup>1</sup> 1532-1617.

<sup>2</sup> J. Oliphant, *The Educational Writings of Richard Mulcaster*, p. 11.

## INTRODUCTION

mitted to participate in it. In the *Laws* he prescribes an education for the children of the artisan class ; they were to learn in play the occupations in which they would later be engaged :

According to my view anyone who would be good at anything must practise that thing from his youth upwards, both in sport and earnest, in its several branches : for example, he who is to be a good builder, should play at building houses ; he who is to be a good husbandman, at tilling the ground ; and those who have the care of their education should provide them when young with mimic tools. They should learn beforehand the knowledge which they will afterwards require for their art. For example, the future carpenter should learn to measure or apply the line in play ; and the future warrior should learn riding, or some other exercise, for amusement, and the teacher should endeavour to direct the children's inclinations and pleasures, by the help of amusements, to their final aim in life. The most important part of education is right training in the nursery. The soul of the child in his play should be guided by the love of that sort of excellenc<sup>t</sup> in which when he grows up to manhood, he will have to be perfected.

Locke proposed the establishment of working schools<sup>1</sup> which the children of all such as demand relief of the parish, above three and under fourteen years of age, should be obliged to attend. " By this means," he explains, " the mother will be eased of a great part of her trouble in looking after and providing for them at home, and so be at more liberty to work ; the children will be kept in much better order, be better provided for, and from infancy be inured to work, which is of no small consequence to the making of them sober and industrious all their lives after." " We do not suppose," he admits, " that children of three years old

<sup>1</sup> R. H. Quick, Appendix A to *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*, by John Locke.

## INTRODUCTION

will be able at that age to get their livelihoods at the working school, but we are sure that what is necessary for their relief will more effectually have that use if it be distributed to them in bread at that school than if it be given to their fathers in money. What they have at home from their parents is seldom more than bread and water, and that, many of them, very scantily too. If therefore care be taken that they have each of them their bellyful of bread daily at school, they will be in no danger of famishing, but, on the contrary, they will be healthy and stronger than those who are bred otherwise."

The views of the great educators representing the aristocratical tradition are thus of little value to the modern educator who has to educate "all the children of all the people," and of less value to the historian of infant education. For light and leading on his problems, the historian must depend mainly on the writers who stand in the democratic succession, and it is significant that Comenius,<sup>1</sup> who proposed in *The Great Didactic* to teach "all things to all men," was the first great educator to devote a special work to infant education.

1592-1670.

PART I  
*INFANT EDUCATION*



J. A. COMENIUS.

From a painting ascribed to J. Ovens in the Amsterdam Art Gallery.

## J. A. COMENIUS

1592-1670

IN *The School of Infancy*<sup>1</sup> Comenius, citing scriptural injunctions in support of his contention, counsels us to reverence Childhood, and he advises parents to exercise their children in faith and piety, then in morals, and finally in knowledge of languages and of arts. Anticipating Fröbel's conception of the Kindergarten he adds : " Whoever has within his house youth exercising themselves in these three departments, possesses a Garden in which celestial plantlets are sown, watered, bloom, and flourish."<sup>2</sup> This analogy did not, however, mislead Comenius into inferring that education should adopt the principle of non-intervention and that the whole duty of the teacher is merely to behold with wondering admiration the unfolding powers of the child, for he straightway affirms<sup>3</sup> :

It must not be supposed that youth can spontaneously and without the application of assiduous labour, be trained up in the manner described. For if a young shoot designed to become a tree, requires to be set or planted, to be watered, to be hedged round for protection, and to be propped up ; if a piece of wood designed for a particular form requires to be submitted to the hatchet, to be split, to be planed, to be carved, to be polished,

<sup>1</sup> Published in 1633.

All quotations are from Benham's translation, published by W. Mallalieu & Co., London, in 1858.

<sup>2</sup> P. 10.

<sup>3</sup> P. 11.

## INFANT EDUCATION

and to be stained with diverse colours ; if a horse, an ox, an ass or a mule, must be trained to perform their services to man ; nay, if man himself stands in need of instruction as to his bodily actions, so that he may be daily trained as to eating, drinking, running, speaking, seizing with the hand, and labouring : How, I pray, can these duties higher and more remote from the senses, such as faith, virtue, wisdom and knowledge, spontaneously come to any one ? It is altogether impossible.

Unlike Locke and other writers of his own times, Comenius approves of schools, at least for children over six years of age, his conception of the school,<sup>1</sup> however, being one to which modern education is now only slowly approximating :

Since parents are often incompetent to instruct their children ; or, by reason of the performance of their duties and family affairs, unable ; while others deem such instruction of trifling importance ; it has been instituted, with prudent and salutary counsel from remote antiquity, that in every state youth should be handed over to the instruction, along with the right of chastisement, to righteous, wise and pious persons.

Such persons were called Pedagogues (leaders not drivers of children), masters, preceptors, and doctors. And places destined for such exercises, were called colleges, gymnasia, and schools (retreats of ease or places of literary amusements). *If* being designed by this name to indicate that the action of teaching and learning is of itself, and in its own nature, pleasing and agreeable ; a mere amusement and mental delight.<sup>2</sup>

One reason given by Comenius for schools is that they afford facilities for intercourse with other children of the

<sup>1</sup> *The School of Infancy*, p. 32.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *The Great Didactic*, ch. xxvi : "Studies, if they are properly organised, form, in themselves a sufficient attraction, and entice all by their inherent pleasantness" ; and Bertrand Russell, *On Education*, p. 137 : "Children like to learn things, provided they are the right things properly taught."

J. A. COMENIUS

same age which is the basis of our modern systems of self-government ; he affirms<sup>1</sup> :

Although their parents may be of great service in all these things ; yet children of their own age are of still greater service, when one relates any thing to another, or when they play together, for children of about the same age and of equal progress and manners and habits sharpen each other more effectually, since the one does not surpass the other in depth of invention ; there is among them neither assumption of superiority of the one over the other, or force, or dread, or fear, but love, candour, free questionings, and answers, about any thing ; all these are defective in us their elders, when we wish intercourse with children, and this defect forms a great obstruction to our free intercourse with them.

Comenius nevertheless advises<sup>2</sup> that children should not be removed from the mother and delivered to preceptors before their sixth year, amongst the reasons he gives being that the infantile age requires more watchfulness and care than a preceptor, having a number of children under him, is able to afford ; in truth, he adds, it is no great delay to wait until the end of the sixth year, or the beginning of the seventh, provided always that care be taken that there be no failure at home during those first years.

Although Comenius contends that children should continue under the care of the mother till their sixth year, he presents a definite plan for the guidance of the mother in the instruction of her child ; this accordingly justifies us in conferring on Comenius's *School of Infancy* priority of place amongst the views of the great educators on infant education. *The School of Infancy* is an elaboration of the chapter<sup>3</sup> in *The Great Didactic* devoted to the "Mother

<sup>1</sup> *The School of Infancy*, p. 38.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 68.

<sup>3</sup> Ch. xxviii.

School." It was the aim of Comenius in this first school "to plant in a man the seeds of all knowledge with which we wish him to be equipped in his journey through life." Influenced no doubt by his pansophic schemes, he hoped to attain this end by making a survey of all existing knowledge and organising it under twenty headings, the enumeration of which sounds alarmingly ambitious; but Comenius possessed a very shrewd insight into the capacities of children, and the actual demands he makes on the child differ but little from those of the modern mental tester; it is unfortunate indeed that the devisers of intelligence tests did not model their batteries of tests on such a survey of experience as Comenius presents. Comenius's list comprises Metaphysics, Physics, Optics, Astronomy, Geography, Chronology, History, Arithmetic, Geometry, Statics, Mechanics, Dialectic, Grammar, Rhetoric, Poetry, Music, Economics, Politics, Morals, Religion. In Astronomy he assumes that the child of six should know the heavens, the sun, moon and stars, and watch their rising and setting. The basis of Chronology is laid, he claims, if the boy at six years of age understands what is meant by an hour, a day, week or year; or what summer and winter are; or the significance of the terms "yesterday," "the day before yesterday," "to-morrow," "the day after to-morrow." Here he formulates his conception of the child's sense of time, and under Optics we have a suggestion of the Binet Scale of intelligence—the pupil should be able to recognise light, darkness and shade, and know the principal colours.

His curriculum in *The School of Infancy* is more general in its nature. The main divisions are Piety, Morals and Sound Learning, the last, he adds, admitting of a threefold

division, for we learn *to know* some things, *to do* some things, and *to say* some things ; or rather, we learn to know, to do and to say all things except such as are bad. Summing up he repeats<sup>1</sup> :

I will therefore shew, in a general way, how infants should be instructed during the first six years. 1. In a knowledge of things. 2. In labours with activity. 3. In speech. 4. In morals and virtues. 5. In piety. 6. Inasmuch as life and sound health constitute the basis of all things, in relation to men, it will, above all things, be taught how that, by the diligence and care of parents, infants may be preserved sound and healthy.

Quoting the maxim—a sound mind in a sound body, and after counselling mothers to nurse their own children and impressing upon them the importance of inculcating right habits, Comenius anticipates<sup>2</sup> the spirit of the best modern infant-school practice :

Finally, as, according to the proverb, *a joyful mind is half health*, nay, according to Sirachides, *The joy of the heart is the very life spring of man*; in this also parents ought to be especially careful never to allow their children to be without delights. For example, in their first year, their spirits should be stirred up by rocking in the cradle, by gentle agitation in the arms, by singing, by rattles, by carrying through some open place or garden, or even by kisses and embraces. Let all these things, however, be done with circumspection. In the second, third, and fourth years, &c let their spirits be stirred up by means of agreeable play with them, or their playing among themselves, by running about, by chasing one another; by music, and any agreeable spectacle, as pictures, &c. And to express myself compendiously, whatever is found to be either agreeable or pleasing must on no account be denied to a child. Nay, if some little occupations can be conveniently provided for its eyes, ears, or other

<sup>1</sup> *The School of Infancy*, p. 19.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 30-1.

## INFANT EDUCATION

senses, they will contribute to its vigour of body and mind. Such things only ought to be denied as are adverse to piety and upright morals.

Comenius prefaces his remarks on the knowledge of natural things in which the child should be instructed by enunciating a general principle of method which Rousseau designated his "fundamental principle," and which may be regarded as equivalent to Pestalozzi's psychological sequence. To the question, How is this instruction to be given? Comenius replies<sup>1</sup>: "Even as their tender age permits, that is, according to their capabilities." Illustrating this principle in its application to language instruction, Comenius anticipates Pestalozzi's *Anschauungsunterricht* and the later "object lesson"; thus the father or mother shows the child this or that object and requires the child to name it by saying: "What is this? The ear. What do you do with it? I hear. And this, what is it? The eye. For what use is the eye? That I may see. How is this named? The foot. What is the foot for? That I may walk, etc."

In his treatment of knowledge of natural objects Comenius follows the lines laid down in *The Great Didactic*, but he observes,<sup>2</sup> in dealing with "Optics," that pictures in books, upon the wall, etc., are pleasing to children, and therefore should not be denied them, for children should, rather have them designedly presented to them,<sup>3</sup> and in developing his views on the "political" knowledge which children should acquire he suggests that their sense of humour should be cultivated: "They ought therefore to be

<sup>1</sup> *The School of Infancy*, p. 32.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 34, 37.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. W. Stem, *Psychology of Early Childhood*, Pt. IV.

taught, and that thoroughly, to understand what is said in joke, and what seriously ; and at the same time to know when to return a joke with a joke . . . —neither when children are disposed for jesting, should they be frowned at or be angrily used or beaten.”<sup>1</sup>

Plato, as we have seen, suggested in *The Laws* that the children of the artisans should learn in play the occupations in which they would later be engaged, and to this end should be provided with mimic tools. Comenius postulates a training in skill for all children.<sup>2</sup> In the *School of Infantry* he emphasises the importance of “ expression ” in teaching and warns us against the dangers of inactivity in children, thereby anticipating Fröbel, Montessori and the Project method. Thus :

Inasmuch as infants try to imitate what they see others do, they should be permitted to have all things, excepting such as might cause injury to themselves or anything else, such as knives, hatchets, glass, &c. When this is not convenient, in place of real instruments they may have toys procured for their use, namely, leaden knives, wooden swords, ploughs, little carriages, sledges, mills, buildings, &c. With these they may always amuse themselves ; thus exercising their bodies to health, their minds to vigour, and their bodily members to agility. . . . They are delighted to construct little houses, and to erect walls of clay, of chips, of wood, or of stone thus displaying an architectural genius. In a word, whatever children delight to play with, provided that it be not hurtful, they ought rather to be gratified than restrained from it, for inactivity is more injurious both to mind and body than anything in which they can be occupied.

<sup>1</sup> P. 37. Cf. John Adams, *The Herbartian Psychology applied to Education*, ch. viii, “A Neglected Educational Organon.”

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *The Great Didactic*, ch. xxi.

<sup>3</sup> Pp. 39-40.

## INFANT EDUCATION

Sufficient has been said to support the contention that the principles of infant education were clearly enunciated by Comenius three hundred years ago and to indicate how tragically educational practice has paid the penalty for its neglect of the theory and history of education.



J. J. ROUSSEAU.

From a painting by Allan Ramsay in the National Gallery of Scotland.

## J. J. ROUSSEAU

1712-1778

ROUSSEAU stands in the history of infant education as the champion of the rights of childhood. As Mrs. Frederika Macdonald phrased it<sup>1</sup> :

Throughout Europe Rousseau's voice went, proclaiming with even more relentless eloquence than it had proclaimed the *Rights of Man* the *Rights of Childhood*. Harsh systems, founded on the old mediæval doctrine of innate depravity were overthrown. Before Pestalozzi, before Froebel, the author of *Emile* laid the foundation of our new theory of education : and taught the civilised world remorse and shame for the needless suffering, and the quenched joy, that through long ages had darkened the dawn of childhood.

To Rousseau can be attributed the origin of practically every development in modern educational theory and practice,<sup>2</sup> and although he did not devote a specific work to infant education he must be considered here. In spite of appearances his *Emile* is a work on universal democratic education ; an education such as Rousseau elaborates with its exclusion of languages from the curriculum and its

<sup>1</sup> Jean Jacques Rousseau : *A New Criticism*, vol. I, p. 181.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Fritz Wittels, *Set the Children Free*, Eng. trans., p. 36 : "In 1693 Locke published a book on education, and he was almost the first writer to draw attention to the peculiarities of the child mentality. Rousseau based his ideas upon those of Locke and of the famous Tsch educationist Comenius († 1670) ; and what had hitherto been the very dry disquisitions of pedagogues became inspired by the Frenchman's fiery eloquence."



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emphasis on the practical realities of life, if it can be proved suitable for a son of rich parents, is assuredly applicable to everybody. Rousseau also abolishes the predetermined curriculum basing instruction on the emerging needs and interests of the child ; he maintains that education should be participation in life, not preparation for more education which with most children never eventuates; and is thus the founder of the child-centred school ; he believes in happiness in education and in the play way, and protests against, the efforts of teachers to force formal instruction upon their pupils and make men of them before their time ; he pleads for liberty for the child and for freedom in education—" man is born free ; and everywhere he is 'in chains'" are the opening words of *The Social Contract*, and the chains are forged by education ; he recognises phases in the child's development with special occupations devised for each stage—physical and sensory training being the activities of early childhood, and he relegates fables to the adolescent stage of development ; many of the exploits into which the tutor manœuvres Emile are but anticipations of the latest American " projects."<sup>1</sup>

Rousseau's standpoint is formulated in the Preface to *Emile* :

We know nothing of childhood ; and with our mistaken notions the further we advance the further we go astray. The wisest writers devote themselves to what a man ought to know, without asking what a child is capable of learning. They are always looking for the man in the child, without considering what he is before he becomes a man. . . . Begin thus by making

<sup>1</sup> Rousseau's influence on later infant education can readily be assessed by reference to the quotations from the *Emile* heading the chapters in such a work as *The Schools of To-morrow*, by E. and J. Dewey.

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a more careful study of your scholars for it is clear that you know nothing about them.

And the burden of his complaint he expresses in the following passage<sup>1</sup>:

What is to be thought, therefore, of that cruel education which sacrifices the present to an uncertain future, that burdens a child with all sorts of restrictions and begins by making him miserable, in order to prepare him for some far-off happiness which he may never enjoy? Even if I considered that education wise in its aims, how could I view without indignation those poor wretches subjected to an intolerable slavery and condemned like galley-slaves to endless toil, with no certainty that they will gain anything by it? The age of harmless mirth is spent in tears, punishments, threats, and slavery. . . . What wisdom can you find that is greater than kindness? Love childhood, indulge its sports, its pleasures, its delightful instincts. Who has not sometimes regretted that age when laughter was ever on the lips, and when the heart was ever at peace? Why rob these innocents of the joys which pass so quickly, of that precious gift which they cannot abuse? Why fill with bitterness the fleeting days of childhood, days which will no more return for them than for you? . . . As soon as they are aware of the joy of life, let them rejoice in it, so that whenever God calls them they may not die without having tasted the joy of life.

Here was an eloquence that might have moved mountains, but it hardly caused a ripple on the surface of the complacent formalism of the schools.

Rousseau contributed various works to educational literature. In *The New Héloïse*<sup>2</sup> he presents an account of home education carried out in almost idyllic surroundings, the mother acting as teacher during the childhood stage of the pupils' lives. This work was doubtless the model for

<sup>1</sup> Everyman trans., pp. 42-3.

<sup>2</sup> Published 1761.

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Pestalozzi's *Leonard and Gertrude*, in which Pestalozzi but translates into the terms of a social class not so fortunately circumstanced, the ideas set forth in Rousseau's romance. *The New Héloïse* likewise affords the best introduction to Rousseau's *Emile*<sup>1</sup>; thus we find Julie, in *The New Héloïse*, remarking :

Nature wants children to be children before they are men. If we deliberately pervert this order, we shall get premature fruits which are neither ripe nor well flavoured, and which soon decay. We shall have youthful sages and grown-up children. Childhood has ways of seeing, thinking, and feeling, peculiar to itself : nothing can be more foolish than to seek to substitute our ways for them. I should as soon expect a child of ten to be five feet in height as to be possessed of judgment.

In his *Considerations on the Government of Poland* (1773) Rousseau describes a national system, but it is on the *Emile* that his reputation as an educationist rests.

The boy's education in *Emile* falls into two contrasted stages : (1) the natural, negative, or non-social education extending up to adolescence, preparing the way for (2) the moral and social training which is, for Rousseau, the ultimate aim of education.

It is the first stage that mainly concerns us. Rousseau designates it negative ; we should now call it preventive.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Published 1762.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. E. A. Irwin and L. A. Marks, *Fitting the School to the Child*, p. 316. "The education which a child receives during the first ten years of his life is the foundation of his future success or failure. Most of our actual teaching consists of re-education for the purpose of correcting wrong habits and attitudes established during earlier years. If the first year of school were devoted to the individual study of the child instead of to academic instruction for which he is not yet ready, his education might then proceed by progressive rather than corrective methods. This would be the exact reverse of our present scheme, which provides only blind mass teaching for the six-year-old child, while only later, if at all, is account taken of individual differences."

Its main characteristic is that Emile was to be shielded from adult society which in Rousseau's view was corrupt ; the child was to be kept as long as possible unsullied by the world. Like Wordsworth, Rousseau regarded the child as coming into the world trailing clouds of glory from God which is his home, and his aim was to postpone as long as possible the shades of the prison house closing in upon the child. Emile was thus to be subject only to the law of necessity, not to the conventional code of society, and this necessity he would find in things, not in persons ; necessity was the mother of instruction. That Emile " must never act from obedience, but from necessity," is one of Rousseau's hard sayings.<sup>1</sup> The child is to be kept dependent on things ; experience is to be his teacher. He is to have no verbal lessons ; Rousseau dismisses reading as the curse of childhood. Moral instruction was to be deferred till adolescence ; during childhood Emile was to have no moral lessons—direct or indirect. All human interference, all adult repression were proscribed, and the child was to be subject only to the discipline of natural consequences : " Let his unreasonable wishes meet with physical obstacles only, or with the punishment which results from his own actions, lessons which will be recalled when the same circumstances occur again."

Rousseau's positive education at this stage is directed to arming the pupil against the evils of society. It comprises physical and sensory training, the aim being, as with Montessori later, to make the child as self-reliant as possible, to develop in him " a well-regulated liberty,"<sup>2</sup> the method being, as again with Montessori, to " surround him with

<sup>1</sup> Everyman trans., p. 55.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 56.

- all the lessons you would have him learn without awaking his suspicions." The sensory training is secured through practical exercises of the nature rather of Kilpatrick's "projects" than of the Montessori exercises with their artificially devised apparatus.

Rousseau thus approves of education by means of a pre-arranged environment and the stimulus which it affords, and he adopts an attitude of comparative indifference to formal subjects : " I am pretty sure Emile will learn to read and write before he is ten, just because I care very little whether he can do so before he is fifteen."

By his plea for freedom for the child Rousseau raised one of the most serious and perplexing problems of modern education. Freedom has indeed become one of the main watchwords of the new education—intellectually, freedom for the pupil to learn for himself and at his own rate ; morally, freedom to discipline himself.

Individual methods of learning which admit of the pupil progressing at his own rate are rapidly taking the place of the lock-step arrangement, according to which the rate at which pupils are expected to travel is arbitrarily set by a teacher acting as a human metronome ; the Montessori, the Dalton, the Project are examples.

Self-government schemes represent the ethical aspect of freedom in education, but many are hardly aware that freedom and discipline are compatible with each other, and it is to this aspect of the problem that we shall restrict our treatment.

Rousseau clearly realised that liberty is not synonymous with licence, for he remarks of those who object to his aim : " If such blundering thinkers fail to distinguish between

liberty and licence, between a merry child and a spoiled darling, let them learn to discriminate.”<sup>1</sup>

Just as modern democracy, if it is to justify itself, must produce a better disciplined people than either Fascism or Bolshevism, so modern educationists realise that the new education must produce better self-disciplined pupils than the old. Freedom in the sense of mere absence of restrictions will not secure this; there must be built up in the pupil a positive principle of self-control. Freedom does not involve withdrawal from our environment—physical and social, but command over our environment. It does not signify the mere flouting of authority, kicking over the traces, but rather willing obedience or submission to a law intelligently accepted and self-imposed.

Rousseau did not fail to emphasise this positive aspect of freedom. Liberty was to be attained by increasing the child’s powers and limiting his desires. Rousseau limited the child’s desires by keeping him dependent on things, thus preventing him from making other people his slaves, for any true conception of freedom requires that it must not be bought at the price of other people’s happiness. Thus “Rousseau counsels<sup>2</sup>: “Give him, not what he wants, but what he needs. Let there be no question of obedience for him or tyranny for you. Supply the strength he lacks just so far as it is required for freedom, not for power.” We must also, Rousseau recognises, increase the child’s strength. Our freedom is proportionate to our power, and our power depends to a large extent on our understanding. When we understand<sup>a</sup> a situation, we are no longer its slave. We have attained sovereignty over it.

<sup>1</sup> *Emile*, Everyman trans., p. 43.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 49.

Psycho-analysis presents valuable illustrations. When the diagnosis of a complex is complete and the patient becomes cognisant of the cause of the repressing force, the tyranny of the complex is broken. A patient in grateful acknowledgment of the services rendered sent his psycho-analyst a present inscribed, "I was in prison and ye visited me." He might have amplified the text and written: "I was in prison and ye set me free." The truth shall make you free.

Educationists debate whether the Kindergarten and the Montessori systems satisfy or restrict the child's need for freedom. In so far as they increase the child's command over his physical and social environment they enhance his freedom. Apparatus is consequently not a restriction of the pupil's freedom; it is a means by which he acquires power over his environment; the more apparatus—if it is adapted to the child's capacities—the more freedom. The child grows in freedom as his physical strength and intelligent understanding increase:

Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,  
 As the swift seasons roll !  
 Leave thy low-vaulted past !  
 Let each new temple, nobler than the last,  
 Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,  
 Till thou at length art free,  
 Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unresting sea !<sup>1</sup>

The freedom achieved by self-discipline is universal; it satisfies Kant's first formulation of the moral law: *Act only on that maxim whereby thou canst at the same time will that it should become a universal law*; whereas freedom in the

<sup>1</sup> Oliver Wendell Holmes, "The Chambered Nautilus."

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sense of absence of restraint is anti-social. Had the positive conception of freedom which Rousseau champions been understood and applied, much of the criticism levelled at the new education would lose its force.

By his antithesis of the natural and the moral and social stage of education Rousseau denied himself the opportunity of employing pupil self-government as a means of developing a freedom that is at once free from adult repression and yet compatible with discipline ; later writers, realising this error, have benefited by his mistake, but all acknowledge Rousseau as the apostle of freedom in education.

Although Rousseau unduly protracted childhood, making it extend to twelve years of age, the principles which he prescribes for the education of this phase of life are those found in later writers on infant education—negatively, no corporal punishment and no books ; positively, physical and sensory training.

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1746-1827

PESTALOZZI's contributions to education have never been adequately realised in this country, although no continental educator was ever better known to his British contemporaries than Pestalozzi. Owen, Brougham, Bell, Mayo, Miss Edgeworth, etc., all visited Pestalozzi, but the times were unpropitious for the recognition and adoption of his educational methods in this country, as interest at that time centred on the extension of educational facilities to meet the needs arising out of the industrial revolution ; and in the controversy excited by the rival claims of Bell and Lancaster to be the founder of the monitorial system—a method of conducting a school through the medium of the scholars themselves and the very antithesis of the method of Pestalozzi—the latter's ideal could not obtain a hearing.

In fact the history of elementary education in Britain for the next hundred years was largely the history of the conflict of the mechanical methods of the monitorial system and the more educative methods of Pestalozzi. Bell himself has left on record<sup>1</sup> a comparison of his own system with that of Pestalozzi, whose school at Yverdun, Switzerland, he had visited, and as it contains a fairly accurate and

<sup>1</sup> *The Wrongs of Children*, 1819, p. 96.



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sympathetic expression of their difference in standpoint we shall consider it here. Bell speaks of "the ingenious and philanthropic Pestalozzi," refers to him as "the benevolent Father of the Continental System" and adds: "The love of infancy distinguishes the good Pestalozzi; and to this, more, perhaps, than to any other cause, he owes much of his deserved celebrity. He is what every master ought to be . . . —the father, the friend, and the companion of his pupils." That the reader may obtain an unprejudiced view of the comparative merits of the two systems Bell quotes a letter of General Jullien, the philanthropic friend and historian of Pestalozzi, as follows:

After carefully observing and impartially comparing Dr. Bell's method, and that of Pestalozzi, we find that these two methods, though equally good and useful, are nevertheless very different, by the two distinct ends which they propose. The former aims at giving children of the lower orders of society the first elements of that instruction, which is necessary to all ranks, in a manner at once sure and solid, speedy and economical. It desires to make all the pupils of a numerous school participate, simultaneously, in this instruction. It acts on them in the mass, by a sort of tactics and mechanism very ingenious. It causes commands, made common to all the children it has united together, to be executed with precision. Nevertheless, it has succeeded in proportioning every degree of instruction to the capacity of every child in the school, by a gradual division of classes, comprised in one school only, and assembled in one room; and by the ingenious process of mutual instruction, because, under the name of monitors, it employs the children themselves, who have made some progress in a determinate sphere of knowledge, to direct and instruct only within the limits of this sphere a certain number of their less advanced companions.

Pestalozzi's method, on the contrary, takes children individually; it wishes to take entire possession of each of them, to

develop and animate him, at the same time, suffering his own nature to act. It is, perhaps, in the present state of public instruction, of less easy and less general application, but it appears eminently fit to perfectionate the cultivation of man, and to realise, in great measure, the wishes that have long been formed by religious men and by enlightened philosophers, who in this respect, truly appreciated the real wants of mankind. The professor of Pestalozzi's institution is not only master, but institutor, educator. He does not submit his pupil to mechanism ; he does not subject him to follow, mechanically, a given example, to believe on the word of the master : he wishes every child to feel within himself a consciousness of his own powers, to give an exact account of the lessons, in which he is author and inventor, having appropriated to himself the ideas placed before him, and the problems which are presented to him, to exclaim, "I have found it ! this is the solution which I sought." It is thus that this method of instruction procures not only the acquisition of knowledge, intrusted to the understanding, much more than to the memory ; but also the progressive perfectioning of the instrument of instruction. The pupil of this method not only learns science, but invents it. "No one," says Bacon, "really and thoroughly possesses any knowledge, but what he can, in some sort, create himself."

The mass methods of Bell and Lancaster, however, prevailed, with the result that during the past century millions of children have been schooled without being educated in Pestalozzi's sense, for their hands had not been trained nor their hearts touched.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In giving evidence before the Commission on Education of the Lower Orders (*Reports from Committees on Education of the Lower Orders*, 1818, Third Report, Minutes of Evidence, p. 197), Lord Brougham said :

"There is another institution for education at Yverdun, which I also visited in August 1816. It is under the direction of Mr. Pestalozzi, and consists of above 100 boys, who are taught every branch of learning, by different masters, upon a principle quite new and deserving of notice. Mr. P. observes, that the received methods of instruction are too mechanical ; that children are taught by rote, and that their reasoning faculties are not sufficiently called into action. Accordingly

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The main purpose of Pestalozzi's life was to effect the social regeneration of the people through education. As Fichte, his best interpreter, expressed it in the *Addresses to the German Nation*<sup>1</sup>:

Towards an end, which he simply surmised and which was quite unknown to him, he has struggled, upheld and stimulated by an unconquerable and all-powerful impulse, a love of the poor neglected people. . . . It was the unknown but definite and unchanging guide which led his life through the all-enveloping night, and, because it was impossible for such a love to leave the earth unrewarded, crowned its evening with his truly spiritual invention, which achieved far more than he had ever longed for in his boldest wishes.

As Rousseau, while apparently prescribing an education for a child of rich parents, was nevertheless enunciating a universal democratic system, so Pestalozzi, assuming that he was prescribing an education for the poor, was really building better than he knew and likewise propounding a universal scheme, for, as Fichte continues:

He simply wished to help his people; but his invention, when developed to the full, raises the people, removes every difference between them and an educated class, provides national education instead of the desired popular education, and might,

all his pupils are taught in a way that excludes mere mechanical operations, and certainly tends greatly to exercise the mind. No books are allowed; but the master standing before a large board or slate, on which he writes, cyphers, or draws (as the case may be) explains or demonstrates to the boys who sit around him; and whose attention is kept awake to every step of the process by constant examinations, in which they are obliged to go through the steps themselves *vivâ voce*. I saw many of them who had gone a considerable way in the mathematics, without having ever used a book. . . . I understand that a gentleman from Ireland has made it his peculiar study, with a view to introducing it there; and he may, I think, before long, give the public an account of it in detail."

<sup>1</sup> English trans., p. 159.

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indeed, have the power of helping peoples and the whole human race to rise from the depths of their present misery.

The aim of education was for Pestalozzi—in Fichte's words—the art of training the whole man completely for manhood. In *How Gertrude Teaches Her Children*<sup>1</sup> Pestalozzi himself says : “ Oh, if men would only comprehend that the aim of all instruction is, and can be, nothing but the development of human nature, by the harmonious cultivation of its powers and talents and the promotion of manliness of life.” This ideal of manliness was a protest against earlier systems of education which trained either the scholar or the craftsman. For Pestalozzi manliness implied training the hand, the head and the heart ; training the whole man—body, mind and soul.<sup>2</sup> Education, for Pestalozzi, was thus intended to secure the conditions of each person's well-being. Its purpose was not to impose on anyone a nature quite foreign to him, but rather to direct and control his development.

As Pestalozzi explains in *How Gertrude Teaches Her Children*, the technique of instruction consists consequently in harmonising or reconciling our message and the demands we make upon the child with his powers at the moment. This technique demands that the child should acquire direct experience of things, for neither book learning nor manual dexterity but life itself is the basis of education and instruction ; and in *Leonard and Gertrude* he describes how Gertrude's verbal instruction served but as an accompaniment to the activities and experiences of the children.

<sup>1</sup> English trans., pp. 156-7.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. L. P. Jacks, *The Education of the Whole Man*, and James Kerr, *The Whole Child* (Fleetway Press, Ltd., 1930).

Pestalozzi was thus brought to introduce his principle of *Anschauungsunterricht*.

*Anschauung*, an untranslatable term, may be paraphrased as first impressions of objects, face-to-face knowledge,<sup>1</sup> personal contact, or it may be regarded as first-hand experience.<sup>2</sup> Whitehead,<sup>3</sup> referring to the words of Sanderson, the late head master of Oundle, "They learn by contact," adds: "The meaning to be attached to this saying goes to the root of the true practice of education. It must start from the particular fact, concrete and definite for individual apprehension, and must gradually evolve towards the general idea. The devil to be avoided is the cramming of general statements which have no reference to individual personal experiences." Ward, Kilpatrick, Sanderson and Whitehead are here only reaffirming Pestalozzi's principle of *Anschauung*.

The value of first-hand experience, of active observation, of knowledge by acquaintance rather than of knowledge by description, of concreteness, no one will question. As Kilpatrick says: "When it comes to the learning process our first-hand experiences have a vividness and a touch that the reported experiences of others certainly lack. In this sense, experience is the best teacher."

There is nevertheless a danger in over-emphasising the place of direct experience and forgetting that it is but the foundation of knowledge and not the complete structure, that it is the beginning and not the end of instruction. Thus Barnett writes<sup>4</sup>:

<sup>1</sup> J. Ward, *Psychology Applied to Education*, p. 51.

<sup>2</sup> W. H. Kilpatrick, *Foundations of Method*, pp. 222-3.

<sup>3</sup> A. N. Whitehead, *The Aims of Education and Other Essays*, p. 97.

<sup>4</sup> *Teaching and Organisation*, pp. 6-7.

No cant is commoner among "educationists" than the maxim that we should educate through things and not words, as if words were not things, or as if ideas were nothing, or as if disputants were always clear themselves whether by "things" they meant actions or concrete objects! Its crudest and most pernicious form among the amateurs who lightly lay down the law on pedagogy is the extraordinary notion that education begins and ends with the "senses."

And Horne states<sup>1</sup>: "We are in danger of bondage to the concrete. We do not face the abstract squarely enough. Our problems require finally to be divorced from the concrete 'setting' in which they are enmeshed. To miss this is to miss the value, joy, and elevation of symbolic thinking." The Report of the Consultative Committee of the Board of Education on *The Primary School*<sup>2</sup> applies this criticism to arithmetic:

It has often been urged that the beginnings of arithmetic should be "concrete." If by this is meant that the child's early work should be founded on his personal experience and deal as far as possible with things familiar to him, it is a truism, and applies to all teaching at this stage. But if it means that the child must only deal with numbers of articles and never with number in the abstract, must add horses to horses and take nuts from nuts, and never add three to four or take seven from twelve, it is pure pedantry. It is common experience that abstract numbers present no difficulties to children while to label quantities in a sum adds nothing to their sense of reality. The truth is that the fundamental operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division, belong to the abstract side of mathematics and are most simply and effectively dealt with in the abstract.

<sup>1</sup> H. H. Horne, *This New Education* (The Abingdon Press, 1931), p. 86.

<sup>2</sup> Pp. 175-6.

There are also limits to the amount and kind of first-hand experience which we can allow the child to acquire. In fact, one of the most important tasks of education from the earliest times and in the most primitive communities is to shield the child from certain experiences, not only to prepare him *for* life, but also to prepare him *against* life. The slogans "Be prepared" and "Safety first" afford evidence of the vital importance of knowledge in advance. To learn by doing, to rely on the discipline by natural consequences, may be fatal. Thus the problem of education is to arrive at the proper balance between first-hand and second-hand experience. For Rousseau, it may be recalled, the pre-adolescent training was based on first-hand knowledge of things; the adolescent training was to be at second-hand —Emile was to acquire social adroitness through the experience of others. Kilpatrick explains :

If vividness and learning were the whole story, we might say that we should use only first-hand experience. But there are other factors to be considered. First-hand experiences may be very painful, for this reason too costly to use. . . . Still again, to use only first-hand experiences is a long process. If we do not somehow shorten the process, each individual would have to start where the race began and there could be no progress in civilization. What combination then to make of first-hand and second-hand experience depends on at least three factors and how they interact in any given instance . . . vividness and definiteness of learning to be the first, cost in pain and sorrow the second, cost in time the third. The more first-hand experience the more vivid and definite the learning, but it is likely to be costly of time and pains. . . . There is a sort of irreducible minimum of first-hand experience which is necessary if second-hand experience is to be assimilated. . . . Early education [should] take pains to provide a great variety of first-hand experiences.

That immediate experience does not, however, suffice, was recognised by Pestalozzi, for these experiences are generally confused and the aim of his method was to raise the confused experiences into definite experiences and these again into clear concepts.

To revert to Pestalozzi's conception of *Anschauung*. Modern psychology would present an analysis of *Anschauung* radically different from that of Pestalozzi; the "intuition" of a thing implies resistance in space and a certain permanence in time.<sup>1</sup> Pestalozzi's analysis, while psychologically unsound, was practically and educationally of no inconsiderable service. Form, Name and Number were, according to his view, the elementary aspects of *Anschauung*. This analysis is obviously unsatisfactory. Form is alterable. Acquaintance with the name or the word-sign, as Fichte pointed out, adds absolutely nothing to the clearness and definiteness of the inner knowledge for the ~~owner~~<sup>1</sup> himself, but simply brings it within the sphere of what can be communicated to others, which is an altogether different sphere; nevertheless, as Fröbel contends,<sup>2</sup> at the stage of childhood the word and the thing, like body and mind, cannot be dissociated; they are for the child one and the same. Later Fröbel remarks that for the child the name first creates the thing. Number, too, is conceptual and not perceptual. Though logically unjustifiable, Pestalozzi's analysis of *Anschauung* allowed him to introduce a training in speech and vocabulary before the teaching of reading, to put drawing before

<sup>1</sup> Cf. J. Ward, *Psychology Applied to Education*, p. 51, and *Psychological Principles*, pp. 161-7.

<sup>2</sup> *Education of Man*, Reclam edition, pp. 74 and 113.

writing, and to base the teaching of number on concrete representation instead of allowing it to remain a mere exercise in cyphering.<sup>1</sup> These aspects of *Anschauung* became the main features of the later object lesson, but Pestalozzi's intention was that the object lesson should be a stage of education preparatory to formal instruction, not a type of lesson alongside of the formal subjects. Pestalozzi thus deserves credit for having brought education to realise the existence of a new and fundamental stage of teaching before the traditional teaching of the formal school subjects; he thus set the stage which Fröbel and Montessori in different ways later filled.

Like Comenius,<sup>2</sup> with whom he had much in common, Pestalozzi devoted a special work to early infant education.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Lessons on Number as given in a Pestalozzian School, Cheam, Surrey*, by C. Reiner (London, 1835) :

"Count the number of persons present in this room."

Write down the names of plants you know and count their number.

Draw as many lines on your slate as there are ones in mine."

<sup>2</sup> *Letters on Early Education. Addressed to J. P. Greaves, Esq.*, by Pestalozzi. Translated from the German Manuscript, London, 1827.

The original text has never been traced.

Green, in *Pestalozzi's Educational Writings*, p. 211, says: "Who the translator was is not certain. The evidence points to Biber, who was in England at the time." Compayré, in *Pestalozzi and Elementary Education*, p. 108, states that Greaves himself translated them into English. This is doubtless an inference from the title-page, but is negatived by the fact that in the "Advertisement" or Preface the translator begs the indulgence of his readers, since he is "writing in a language not his own." Salmon, in *Infant Schools, their History and Theory*, states, p. 78, that the Letters were translated by Dr. Worms (? Wurm), and in a private letter to the present writer gave as his authority Buisson's *Dictionnaire de Pédagogie*, s.v. Greaves. Dr. Goldhahn, of the Comenius-Library, Leipzig, in a correspondence with the writer on this and other questions on Pestalozzian literature, agrees that Wurm, who had been associated with Greaves on the Continent and who later became a teacher in Dr. Mayo's school at Cheam, is most likely the translator.

Green also says that it is a matter of surprise that the Letters should never have

In this he pleads for the recognition and development of the spiritual nature of the child, and his philosophical idealism here attains its most perfect expression.

In *How Gertrude Teaches* we have the definite rejection by Pestalozzi of Naturalism, the doctrine that "sees in the phenomena of conscious life but the highest manifestation of properties that permeate all organisms through and through."<sup>1</sup> Pestalozzi, with modern idealists and biologists like Professor J. S. Haldane and Professor Jennings, believes that in human nature new powers not present in animal life emerge, and that a knowledge of children can be got only by a study of children and not by a study of animals. Thus Pestalozzi affirms<sup>2</sup>:

Man will only become man through his inner and spiritual life. He becomes through it independent, free, and contented. Mere physical Nature leads him not thither. She is in her very nature blind; her ways are ways of darkness and death. Therefore the education and training of our race must be taken out of the hands of blind sensuous Nature, and the influence of her darkness and death, and put into the hands of our moral and spiritual being, and its divine, eternal, inner light and truth.

You cannot trust Nature, but must do everything to take the reins out of her blind hands and put them into the hands of principles and powers in which the experience of ages has put them.

If by my efforts I have in any way succeeded in preparing the road to the goal at which I have been aiming, that is to take human education out of the hands of blind Nature, to free it from the destructive influence of her sensual side, and put it

been reprinted. This is not so, for they appeared in 1850 in "The Phoenix Library: A Series of Original and Reprinted Works," published in London by Charles Gilpin in 1850, and were again published in 1851 by Longmans, Brown, Green and Longmans.

<sup>1</sup> Sir T. Percy Nunn, *Education: Its Data and First Principles*, p. 46.

<sup>2</sup> Pp. 160-1, 187, 190-1.

into the hands of the noblest powers of our nature, the soul of which is faith and love; if I can only in some slight degree succeed in making the Art of education begin in the sanctuary of home, more than it now does, and to put new life into the religious instinct of our race, from this tender side; if I should only have partly succeeded in bringing nearer to my contemporaries the withered rootstock of mental and spiritual education, and an Art of education in harmony with the noblest powers of heart and mind; if I have done this, my life will be blessed, and I shall see my greatest hopes fulfilled.

Throughout the *Letters* Pestalozzi insists on the spiritual nature of man. Thus<sup>1</sup>:

While the animal is for ever actuated by that instinct to which it owes its preservation, and all its powers and enjoyments, a something will assert its right in man, to hold empire over all his powers; to control the lower part of his nature, and to lead him to those exertions which will secure for him a place in the scale of moral being.

The animal instinct is a principle which knows no higher object than self. Self-preservation is the first ~~point~~<sup>aim</sup> which it tries to secure; and in its progressive desire of enjoyment, self is still the centre of its agency. It is not the same with the mind, or with the affections of the heart. The fact which speaks most unquestionably for the spiritual nature of man, is the sacrifice of personal comfort or enjoyment, for the happiness of others; the subordination of individual desire, to higher purposes.

The aim of infant education is defined from this idealistic or spiritual standpoint as follows<sup>2</sup>:

She [the mother] will look upon education, not as a task which to her is invariably connected with much labour and difficulty, but as a work of which the facility, and in a great measure the success also, is dependent on herself. She will look upon her

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 39, 47.

<sup>2</sup> P. 65.

own efforts in behalf of her child not as a matter of indifference, or at least of convenience, but as a most sacred and most weighty obligation. She will be convinced, that education does not consist in a series of admonitions and corrections, of rewards and punishments, of injunctions and directions, strung together without unity of purpose, or dignity of execution ; but that it ought to present an unbroken chain of measures, originating in the same principle,—in a knowledge of the constant laws of our nature ; practised in the same spirit,—a spirit of benevolence and firmness ; and leading to the same end,—the elevation of man to the true dignity of a spiritual being.

And this result cannot be left to chance, since the world upon which the child will later be cast is “a world of inconstancy, of distrust, of disbelief.”

But the dearer your child is to you, fond mother ! the more urgently would I insist on your examining that life into which he will one day be thrown. Do you find it replete with danger ? You must encompass him with a shield that shall preserve his innocence. Do you find it a maze of error ? You must show him that ~~magic~~ clue which shall lead to the fountain of truth. Do you find it lifeless and dead, under all its busy superficialities ? You must try to nourish in him that spirit of activity which shall keep his powers alive, and impel him forward to improve, though all around him should be lost in the habitual mechanism of a stationary idleness.<sup>1</sup>

The *Letters* are an appeal to mothers to train the child in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, to develop in him the innate principle of love and faith.<sup>2</sup> Pestalozzi believes that he is justified in assuming that maternal love is the most powerful agent, and that affection is the primitive motive in early education.<sup>3</sup> The only influence, he says,<sup>4</sup> to which the heart is accessible long before the

<sup>1</sup> *Letters*, p. 13.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 25.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 57.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 54.

understanding could have adopted or rejected it as a motive, is affection. And it is a fact that no person can be so well qualified at an early period to gain the affection of a child, as the mother. And he repeats<sup>1</sup>:

In the formation of character, as well as in the mode of giving instruction, kindness ought to be the first and ruling principle: it certainly is the most powerful. Fear may do much, and other motives may be employed with apparent success; but to interest the mind, and to form the heart, nothing is so permanently influential as affection: it is the easiest way to attain the highest ends.

Pestalozzi follows Rousseau in observing that the mother should never neglect the wants of her child when they are real, and never indulge them when they are imaginary, or because they are expressed with importunity<sup>2</sup>; but he insists on the fact that she who would discipline others must first discipline herself: "The greatest difficulty which the mother will find in her early attempts to form that habit in her infant, does not rest with the importunity of the infant, but with her own weakness."<sup>3</sup>

To affection he adds firmness as a quality in the mother who would educate aright. But firmness is not to be confused with severity; the fear of punishment can only tend to make the evil worse, and "the mere act of forbidding is a strong excitement to desire."<sup>4</sup>

Again following Rousseau, Pestalozzi advocates physical and sensory training, drawing and music being included in the latter, and the spirit in which the exercises are to be introduced he explains in the passage<sup>5</sup>:

<sup>1</sup> *Letters*, p. 46. <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 49. <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 67. <sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 72. <sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 94.

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For it is desirable<sup>1</sup> that every thing of that kind should be treated as an amusement, rather than as anything else. The greatest liberty must prevail, and the whole must be done with a certain cheerfulness, without which all these exercises, as gymnastics themselves, would become dull, pedantic, and ridiculous.

But he warns us,<sup>1</sup> thereby revealing a close correspondence with Herbart's doctrine of interest<sup>2</sup> and correcting the notions of some advocates of the new education, that :

When I recommend to a mother to avoid wearying a child by her instructions, I do not wish to encourage the notion, that instruction should always take the character of an amusement, or even of a play. I am convinced, that such a notion, where it is acted upon by a teacher, will for ever preclude solidity of knowledge, and from a want of sufficient exertions on the part of the pupils, will lead to that very result which I wish to avoid by my principle of a constant employment of the thinking powers.

A child must very early in life be taught a lesson, which frequently comes too late, and is then a most painful one,—that exertion is indispensable for the attainment of knowledge. But a child should not be taught to look upon exertion as an unavoidable evil. The motive of fear should not be made a stimulus to exertion. It will destroy the interest, and will speedily create disgust.

This *interest* in study, is the first thing which a teacher, and in the instances before us, which a mother should endeavour to excite and keep alive. There are scarcely any circumstances in which a want of application in children does not proceed from a want of interest ; and there are perhaps none, under which a want of interest does not originate in the mode of treatment adopted by the teacher.

<sup>1</sup> Letters, pp. 130-1.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Herbart, *Science of Education* (published 1806), "To be wearisome is the cardinal sin of instruction." "The teacher is not to be misled into turning instruction into play, nor on the other hand designedly into work ; he sees before him a serious business and tries to forward it with gentle but steady hand."

Like Rousseau, Pestalozzi maintains<sup>1</sup> that we should teach always by things rather than by words. "Let there be as few objects as possible named to the infant, unless you are prepared to show the objects themselves." Of objects which cannot be brought before the child in reality, pictures, he concedes, should be introduced, and recalling Comenius's words he adds : "An instruction founded on pictures will always be found a favourite branch with children, and if this curiosity is well directed and judiciously satisfied, it will prove one of the most useful and instructive." Teachers availed themselves too readily of Pestalozzi's concession, with the results that Object Lessons degenerated into Picture Lessons, and Pestalozzi's advance on Comenius was lost.

The method of the Object Lesson is formulated in the advice<sup>2</sup> :

But if a mother is to teach by Things she must recollect also, that to the formation of an idea, more is requisite than the bringing the object before the senses. Its qualities must be explained ; its origin must be accounted for ; its parts must be described, and their relation to the whole ascertained ; its use, its effects or consequences, must be stated. All this must be done, at least, in a manner sufficiently clear and comprehensive to enable the child to distinguish the object from other objects, and to account for the distinction which is made.

Pestalozzi never abandons the demand for personal experience of things, and reminds us<sup>3</sup> that the ultimate end of education is not a perfection in the accomplishments of the school, but fitness for life ; not the acquirement of habits of blind obedience and of prescribed diligence, but a preparation for independent action.

<sup>1</sup> Letters, p. 122.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 123.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 83.

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Emphasis on the elementary school subjects and on all that Pestalozzi did for them tends to divert attention from the fact that Pestalozzi is throughout dealing with Domestic or Home Education, and that the ideal educational institution is for him, not the school but the home, the school being but a temporary expedient till mothers were sufficiently educated to undertake the education of their own children. Thus<sup>1</sup>:

Those have indeed widely mistaken the meaning of all my plans, and of those of my friends, who suppose that in our labours for popular education, we have not an higher end in view, than the improvement of a system of instruction, or the perfection, as it were, of the gymnastics of the intellect. We have been busily engaged in reforming the schools, for we consider them as essential in the progress of education: but we consider the fireside circle as far more essential. We have done all in our power to bring up children with a view to become teachers, and we have every reason to congratulate the schools that we have benefited by this plan: but we have thought it the most important feature, and the first duty of our own schools, and of every school, to develop in the pupils confided to our care those feelings, and to store their minds with that knowledge, which at a more advanced period of life, may enable them to give all their heart, and the unwearied use of their powers, to the diffusion of the true spirit which should prevail in a domestic circle. In fact, whoever has the welfare of the rising generation at heart, cannot do better than consider as his highest object, the Education of Mothers.

By presenting Pestalozzi's idealism in its highest form and by the attention devoted to early infant education, the *Letters to Greaves* serve to effect the transition to Fröbel's educational theory and practice.

<sup>1</sup> *Letters*, pp. 108-9.



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1782-1852

THE influences at work fashioning Fröbel's educational theory were, in addition to his own schooling and education, the idealistic philosophy of his age and the educational doctrines of Rousseau and Pestalozzi. As the latter were also, according to our interpretation,<sup>1</sup> based on an idealistic philosophy, they but enhanced the tendencies of the Kantian doctrine.

Fröbel's name is generally associated with the Kindergarten practices, but the work which is still usually prescribed for examinations is *The Education of Man* (*Die Menschenerziehung*), published in 1826, many years before he had devised his Kindergarten or even originated the term "Kindergarten."<sup>2</sup> Adams, in *The Herbartian Psychology Applied to Education*,<sup>3</sup> suggests that there is little or no connection between them. He asserts :

In the *Education of Man* we have beautiful, if obscurely expressed, truths about education. In the Kindergarten we have clear, cut-and-dry, consistent principles. But the Kindergarten cannot be evolved from the *Education of Man*. Between the two there is a great gulf fixed, a gulf that Froebel has not bridged.

A connection can nevertheless be traced, for *The Educa-*

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *The Philosophical Bases of Education*, ch. vi.

<sup>2</sup> The term occurred to Fröbel in 1840.

<sup>3</sup> P. 40.

*tion of Man* reflects the idealistic metaphysics of Kant, and the sequence of the Kindergarten gifts follows an order corresponding to the dialectical process of Hegel, which itself is derived from Kant's "critical" method.

Idealism contends that the ultimate principle of explanation of the universe is a spiritual one. The physical world it regards as merely one aspect of reality, which manifests itself likewise in the moral sphere and in the realm of beauty. Taken by itself the physical world is an abstraction, an incomplete and partial representation of experience. Such in general terms is Kant's conclusion, but the form in which idealism presented itself to Fröbel was that expressed in the writings of another German philosopher—Krause,<sup>1</sup> and this is reflected in various passages in *The Education of Man*.<sup>2</sup> Thus Fröbel claims<sup>3</sup>:

Nature and all existence are a manifestation, a revelation of God; the *raison d'être* of all existence is to reveal God. Everything is divine by nature; its essence is divine. Everything is relatively a unity, since God is unity complete and perfect in itself. . . . From every point, from every object of nature and from every form of life there is a way to God. . . . The phenomena of nature form a more beautiful ladder to heaven and from heaven to earth than that which Jacob beheld; not a one-way ladder leading only upwards, but one approached from every side and leading in all directions. Not in dreams alone is it visible; it is permanent, all encompassing. It is beautiful; flowers encircle it and angels with the eyes of children look out therefrom.

When the human being, he also states,<sup>4</sup> comes to realise

<sup>1</sup> See the writer's *The Doctrines of the Great Educators*, pp. 249–50.

<sup>2</sup> Quotations from *Die Menschenerziehung* are translated from the Reclam edition. For convenience the pages in Hailmann's translation are indicated.

<sup>3</sup> Reclam, pp. 175 and 238; Hailmann, pp. 151–2, 202.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 166–7; Hailmann, p. 144.

consciously and clearly that his spiritual nature proceeds from God, that he was born in God and came forth from God, that originally he was one with God, that he is necessarily dependent on Him, that he is also in uninterrupted communion with Him, he knows that in the true sense of the words, God is his Father and he himself is a child of God. Rousseau had employed similar terms in the *Emile*<sup>1</sup> when, in his answer to the question "Where does the divine Intelligence exist?" he replied: "Not merely in the revolving heavens, nor in the sun which gives us light, not in myself alone, but in the sheep that grazes, the bird that flies, the stone that falls, and the leaf blown by the wind"; and the writer has heard a professor of philosophy expounding the idealistic doctrine declare with an excusable exaggeration that every wild-rose in the hedge-rows was a witness to the divine and every babe as divine as the babe of Mary.<sup>2</sup> These views are epitomised in the opening sentences of *The Education of Man*:

An eternal law informs, influences, and directs all things; it expresses itself alike in what is external—Nature, and in what is internal—Spirit, also in what unites these two—Life. . . . An almighty, eternal, self-conscious Unity serves as the foundation of this omnipotent rule. This Unity is God. Everything comes forth from God and by God alone is governed. God is the first cause of all things. He sustains and rules over everything. In Him all things move and have their being. The Divine that pervades each thing is the essence of that thing. The function and end of all things is to declare their Essence which is the Divine that dwells in them, and thus to reveal God in and by what is external and transitory. . . . The proper destiny and

<sup>1</sup> Everyman trans., p. 237.

<sup>2</sup> The idealistic standpoint is adopted in G. Gentile, *The Reform of Education*, and in the author's *The Philosophical Bases of Education*.

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vocation of man, as a being endowed with understanding and reason, is to bring to clear consciousness his nature, that is, the Divine in him, to exercise self-determination and freedom, and thus to make manifest in his own life, the Divine nature."

Hegel, noting the self-contradictions to which the categories of natural science lead when they are applied beyond their proper sphere, concluded that this tendency of a conception when pressed beyond its legitimate sphere to reveal an inherent contradiction and pass into its opposite disclosed the true nature of thought which proceeded according to what he termed the dialectical process, "thesis" leading to "antithesis," these in turn being reconciled in a higher "synthesis." This dialectical process is illustrated in Fröbel's tendency to regard the Divine as Unity, Nature as Diversity, and Humanity as Individuality. The child is accordingly to be regarded in three separate relations—as a child of God, as a child of Nature, and as a human child.<sup>1</sup> The dialectical movement also determines teaching method :

Every object and every form of existence is known only when it is related to its opposite, and only in so far as its unity, its agreement with and resemblance to this is discovered; and this knowledge becomes the more perfect the more complete is the contrast with its opposite and the recognition of the mediating link.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Pedagogics of the Kindergarten*, p. 11. Cf. *The Education of Man*, ch. i, where Fröbel introduces Morality to mediate between Religion and Manual Activity.

<sup>2</sup> *The Education of Man*, Reclam edition, p. 68. Cf. *The Pedagogics of the Kindergarten*, p. 26—"Everything is and will be best recognised by means of that which is its opposite"; also p. 186.

Fröbel's principle of contrast or law of opposites is but an incomplete form of the dialectical process.

The second gift in its revised form<sup>1</sup> comprises the sphere or globe, the cube and the cylinder :

The sphere and cube are pure opposites. They stand to each other in the relation of unity and plurality, but especially of movement and rest, of round and straight. The law of connection demands for these two opposite, yet like, bodies and objects of play a connecting one, which is the cylinder. It combines unity complete in itself in the round surface, and plurality in the two straight ones.

In addition to a common underlying metaphysical principle, *The Education of Man*, it might be said, presents Fröbel's theory of play; while the Kindergarten exemplifies the practice.

In *The Education of Man* Fröbel agrees with Rousseau in challenging the traditional doctrine of innate depravity and in affirming the innate goodness of man. Rousseau had maintained<sup>2</sup> that the first impulses of nature are always right ; there is no original sin in the human heart, the how and the why of every vice can be traced. Fröbel repeats<sup>3</sup> :

Surely the nature of man in itself is good and there are good attributes and tendencies in mankind. Man in himself is not evil although he sins ; no more do evil qualities exist in man. It is treason to mankind and to man to say that his nature is neither good nor bad, and more so to suggest that his nature is essentially wicked.

This extreme position would not be maintained by modern educationists who, while admitting that there is an

<sup>1</sup> The first form comprised only the sphere and the cube, as in *The Pedagogics of the Kindergarten*, ch. vii. The later form will be found in *Education by Development*, p. 204. Cf. p. 286.

<sup>2</sup> *Emile*, Everyman trans., p. 16.

<sup>3</sup> Reclam edition, p. 141; Hailmann, p. 120.

inborn capacity for morality in man, regard the endowment of the child as a-moral or non-moral, but it was doubtless necessary to correct the misunderstandings of centuries and to orient education anew.

Just as, with Rousseau, the early education was to be negative or preventive, so in accordance with Fröbel's view of the original goodness of man education should be passive and protective, not directive and interfering. Education, he says in the introductory sections of *The Education of Man*, should bring man to a clear understanding of himself, should lead to peace with Nature and union with God. In all these respects it should be based on, and proceed not from the outward expression of man's actions, but from his inner nature. Unspoilt endowment is nevertheless seldom encountered, but has to be assumed, otherwise when it did occur it would pass undetected. Even when coercive treatment is called for, education, admonition and instruction should be upholding and encouraging rather than prescriptive and dictatorial, since the latter procedure would arrest the true progress of mankind which implies the manifestation of the Divine in man through freedom and self-determination.

Although man's nature is spiritual, it is not, according to Fröbel, immutable ; on the contrary it must be regarded as a constantly and ever-developing process, self-evolving, eternally active, progressing always from one stage to another to a goal anchored in Infinity and Eternity. Each successive generation and each individual must traverse in its own experience the whole previous development of mankind, otherwise they would fail to appreciate the earlier stages and the contemporary phase ; such recapitulation

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must not, however, be a vain repetition,<sup>1</sup> but involve active participation.<sup>1</sup> Although each individual thus reflects the whole history of the race, he nevertheless preserves the integrity of his own unique personality.

Fröbel here assumes the validity of the well-known principle of recapitulation or of the parallelism of racial and individual development. It accords well with his view of development as determined mainly from within, and ignores the part played by environment in stimulating and modifying this inner development.<sup>2</sup> Fröbel's conception of development differs from its modern counterpart; it is technically known as "preformation," and assumes that the plant or organism is in miniature complete from the outset, and that the process is merely one of enlargement, whereas the modern view recognises differentiation of structure in the course of development.<sup>3</sup> It is nevertheless unhistorical to condemn Fröbel for his use of this conception, since Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* did not appear till thirty years after the publication of *The Education of Man*. His principle of continuity also calls for comment. Since the time of Rousseau the stratification view, that is, the recognition of well-marked stages in development, has been generally accepted by educationists, whereas psychologists have insisted that development is regular and con-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Hailmann, pp. 17-18. Also pp. 41, 160: "In the development of the inner life of the individual man the history of the spiritual development of the race is repeated."

<sup>2</sup> On principle of recapitulation see Board of Education Consultative Committee's Report, *The Primary School*, Appendix III, pp. 256-7, and the author's *The Philosophical Bases of Education*, pp. 193-5.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *Education by Development*, translated by Josephine Jarvis, p. 42: "So developing, this point of union and starting point resembles a seed, the innermost part bearing within itself the whole tree, which develops constantly and in accordance with its own laws and those of Nature during hundreds and thousands of years."

tinuous.<sup>1</sup> Fröbel declares that not alone of the religious aspect, but likewise for man's whole nature it is essential to regard his development as continuously progressive. To admit sharply defined limits and opposing stages is distinctly prejudicial, especially when the stages of childhood and boyhood are regarded as quite different from those of youth and manhood, as is popularly assumed, whereas in reality they merge into one another without interruption.<sup>2</sup>

"For purposes of exposition Fröbel is compelled to admit stages in development, and he insists throughout that each stage must be fully exploited if later development is not to be prejudiced, that there must be no skipping of a stage and no gaps in instruction. Rousseau had ascribed<sup>3</sup> all the defects of body and mind in pupils to the same cause, namely, "the desire to make men of them before their time." He warns us to beware of anticipating teaching which demands maturity of mind,<sup>4</sup> and protests<sup>5</sup> that his method does not depend on his examples; it depends on the amount of a man's powers at different ages, and the choice of occupations adapted to these powers. Fröbel reminds parents that parents should consider their child in relation to all stages of development without ignoring any, and that they should especially consider that the energetic and thoroughgoing development of each successive stage depends on the vigorous, complete and appropriate development of each preceding stage. This, he maintains, is easily overlooked by parents who assume the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *The Primary School*, Appendix III, p. 255.

<sup>2</sup> Reclam, pp. 55-6; Hailmann, pp. 27-8.

<sup>3</sup> *Emile*, Everyman trans., p. 91.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 165.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 155. Cf. p. 293, "There is a time for every kind of teaching."

individual to be a boy if he has attained a boy's age, whereas he can be so regarded only if he has exhausted all that childhood and boyhood demand of him in mind, temperament and body. Neglect of this, especially in the earliest stages, creates complications which at a later stage even the most skilful teacher cannot combat.<sup>1</sup>

After the manner of Rousseau in the *Emile*, Fröbel proposes, in *The Education of Man*, to deal with the various stages of development; in the volume published in 1826 he dealt, nevertheless, only with the stages up to boyhood. The projected continuation remained unwritten, but this proved no great loss, for Fröbel's fame rests on his treatment of the early phases of development which are likewise our concern here.

<sup>1</sup> Reclam, pp. 36-8; Hailmann, pp. 28-30.

Frobel illustrates this danger in the *Mutter-und-Kose Lieder*, Eng. trans., p. 150: "Your child will learn to toddle before he learns to walk; he tries to stand before he makes an effort to step forwards; he tries to strengthen and develop his legs and his whole body before he is willing to stand on his legs and takes pleasure in so doing. If you make your child, just because he has legs, stand and walk all at once, you will make him have weak bow-legs. Now, Mother, in the development of the body, the law of the intellect is also expressed. If you come up with help too late, your child is awkward and clumsy in body and mind; if you come too soon—alas, we meet with only too many people who from this cause wander about with weak, bow-legged dispositions, just as children do with weak legs. O Mother, Mother! and all you who take her place, do not forget this; rear your child in harmony with life's inter-dependence and according to its simple laws."

Cf. *The Education of Man*, Reclam, pp. 309-10; Hailmann, pp. 254-5: "If the moment of the emergence of the budding point of a subject of instruction is allowed to pass unheeded, the later or earlier attempt to introduce arbitrarily even a subject recognised as essential will be fruitless." This principle is applied to the impulse to activity. Reclam, p. 122; Hailmann, p. 100.

The same principle is stated by Montessori, *The Montessori Method*, Eng. trans., p. 358, thus: "It is necessary to offer those exercises which correspond to the need of development felt by an organism; and if the child's age has carried him past a certain need, it is never possible to obtain, in its fulness, a development which missed its proper moment. Hence children grow up, often fatally and irrevocably, imperfectly developed."

Fröbel's principle, that the full realisation of each stage of development is essential for the proper development of the later periods, leads him to assign the greatest significance to the earliest stage,<sup>1</sup> a view which has been reinforced of late by the findings of psycho-analysis. Thus Fröbel declares<sup>2</sup>:

It is momentous for the present and the future life of anyone that he should assimilate nothing unwholesome, mean, or vulgar, nothing questionable or bad. The glances and gestures of all those in the child's vicinity should be innocent and steadfast, awakening and fostering trust. The environment itself should so far as this is possible be pure and bright; with fresh air, well lit and favourably situated for locality. For unfortunately the impressions assimilated in infancy are scarcely ever eradicated since the child's whole nature like a sensitive plate is exposed to every influence from without. The hardest conflicts encountered by a person and the most adverse and depressing vicissitudes of later life have often their source in this early stage of development, hence the importance of the care of the infant.

Here Fröbel suggests that the conflicts of adulthood are for the most part environmentally conditioned, a view which Dewey has expressed in *The Sources of a Science of Education*<sup>3</sup> in these terms: "The most harmful and undesirable emotional attitudes of children, so fundamental in development, especially fears, inferiorities, etc., have

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Education by Development*, Eng. trans., p. 161: "Even the child and the life of childhood are to be recognised, acknowledged, and actually considered and treated in life relatively as a whole in its worth and dignity."

And, p. 168: "The effort to acknowledge the dignity of the child, of childhood, and of the life of childhood; not as single and isolated, but as a whole, complete within itself, as the germ and embryo of the development and representation of a life of humanity according to the words of Jesus 'of such is the kingdom of heaven.'"

<sup>2</sup> *The Education of Man*, Reclam, p. 51; Hailmann, p. 24.

<sup>3</sup> P. 68.

been shown to be due mainly to social conditioning." Later, in dealing with Boyhood, Fröbel maintains<sup>1</sup> that beneath each suspicion of waywardness in man there underlies essentially and originally a mutilated and distorted good attribute, a good creative tendency, only suppressed, misunderstood, misdirected, gone astray. And just as Rousseau affirmed that children's lies are entirely the work of their teachers,<sup>2</sup> Fröbel makes mention of the birds of ill omen, especially the educators, who make the child culpable even when, if not quite blameless, he is yet innocent in intent.<sup>3</sup>

Here Fröbel is surprisingly modern; the same cannot, however, be said of his treatment of sensory development. He unfortunately adopts the metaphysical instead of the psychological standpoint, and relies on the dialectical method, with the result that his treatment compares unfavourably with that of Rousseau. He assumes that the senses are correlated with the various physical states of matter, and that they can be paired to correspond with objects in motion or at rest; thus the senses for the apprehension of objects in the form of gases are hearing and sight; in the form of liquids, taste and smell; in the solid form, feeling and touch. He adds<sup>4</sup> that in conformity with the law that an object is known through its opposite, the sense of hearing is the first to be developed in the child; later on, there follows, attended, conditioned and stimulated by this, the sense of sight.

We can only conjecture what the earliest sensory experiences of the child are. It is doubtless true that the

<sup>1</sup> Reclam, p. 143; Hailmann, p. 121. <sup>2</sup> Reclam, p. 147. Hailmann, p. 124.

<sup>2</sup> *Emile*, Everyman Eng. trans., p. 68. <sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 69; Hailmann, p. 45.

child even before birth has certain sensory experiences. The sensory capacities of the new-born child are mainly organic—pressure, touch, temperature, smell, taste. They are doubtless diffuse, undifferentiated, and have no significant objective reference. They are likely to be closely allied to what Rivers<sup>1</sup> called the protopathic system ; the incomplete insulation of the neurones through the absence of the medullary sheaths and the imperfect organisation of the brain would lead us to infer this. The order of development may not be uniform, and the expressive movements of the child, while centrally and not peripherally initiated, are impulsive in nature and are not indicative of cognitive processes. Thus the child's smile is not an expression of sympathy, as Fröbel suggests<sup>2</sup> ; his cry is not an expression of sorrow. They may both be but expressions of general discomfort. Fröbel's account of the evolution of the sensory capacities, may thus be said to be romantic and metaphysical rather than biological and psychological.

In the explanations appended to the pictures in his *Mother and Baby Songs*,<sup>3</sup> Fröbel displays a keener insight into the psychology of infancy. Prüfer<sup>4</sup> declares that this is the most characteristic of Fröbel's works, and commends the idea that the little poems on the pictures are accompanied by song.<sup>5</sup> It compares favourably with Pestalozzi's *Buch der Mütter*,<sup>6</sup> in which Pestalozzi, rather slavishly adhering to his law of physical proximity and distance, suggested that the starting-point of *Anschauung* and language instruc-

<sup>1</sup> *Psychology and the Unconscious.*

<sup>2</sup> Reclam, pp. 52-3 ; Hailmann, p. 21.

<sup>3</sup> Published 1844.

<sup>4</sup>

<sup>5</sup> *Friedrich Fröbel, Sein Leben und Schaffen*, p. 101.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Fröbel, *Education by Development*, p. 178 : "Hence the first plays of the body, limbs and senses, the little plays of the Mother-Play and Nursery Songs practically produced for the earliest period of childhood and infancy are mostly accompanied by song."

<sup>6</sup> Published 1803.

tion should be the child's own body, and, in accordance with his principle of unbroken sequence, the various features of this should be exhausted before the mother proceeds to another object.<sup>1</sup> Fröbel is nevertheless inclined to overrate the importance of sensory training,<sup>2</sup> and in the *Mother and Baby Songs*<sup>3</sup> he assumes that the senses are trustworthy guides.

Fröbel is happier in describing in *The Education of Man*<sup>4</sup> the development of the body and limbs :

The progressive development of the senses is accompanied by the regular use of body and limbs in an order fixed by the nature of the body and the qualities of external objects.

The objects of the external world are near and at rest and thus require us to keep still; or they are in motion, increasing the distance from us, and thus challenge us to appropriate, seize or hold them fast; or they remain at a distance and induce us to move towards them or bring them nearer. Thus is developed the use of the limbs for sitting or reclining, for grasping or seizing, for walking and jumping. Standing is the most perfect instance of the conjoint use of all the limbs and body; it demands the finding of the body's centre of gravity.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. J. A. Green, *Life and Work of Pestalozzi*, pp. 177-80. Fichte, in  *Addresses to the German Nation* (Eng. trans.), had criticised this procedure, remarking (p. 164) : "To take the child's body as the subject of instruction is also a mistake. . . . Pestalozzi starts with the very correct statement that the first object of the child's knowledge must be the child himself. But is the child's body, then, the child himself? If it must be a human body, would not the mother's body be far closer and more visible to him? And how can the child obtain a perceptual knowledge of his body, without first having learnt to use it?"

Frobel repeats, *The Education of Man* (Reclam, p. 300; Hailmann, p. 248), that it does not follow that man, especially in boyhood, knows his own body because it is so near to him.

<sup>2</sup> What Helen Keller has achieved with a very restricted range of sensory capacities should check exaggeration in this respect.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Student's edition, p. 136. In *The Education of Man* (Reclam, p. 35; Hailmann, p. 8) Fröbel employs the false analogy of the instincts in animals.

<sup>4</sup> Reclam, pp. 69-70; Hailmann, pp. 47-8.

At this stage of development the growing man is still concerned with the use, the employment, the exercise of his body, senses and limbs, not with what he achieves by their means or what results from their use. To such effects he is completely indifferent.

Here Fröbel recognises that the young child's activity exists for its own sake, a view to which Montessori has lent support by her striking illustration<sup>1</sup> of the baby in the Pincian Gardens in Rome filling a pail by shovelling gravel into it when his nurse, failing to appreciate his intention, herself filled the pail with gravel and set pail and baby into his baby-carriage with the fixed conviction that she had given him what he wanted.<sup>2</sup>

The second stage of development with which Fröbel deals in *The Education of Man* is childhood, from about the third year of life till formal schooling begins, that is, till about the seventh year.<sup>3</sup> While the earliest stage might be said to deal with the nurture of the child, childhood deals with his education, and the succeeding stage, that of boyhood, is characterised by instruction. In Fröbel's terminology it is the stage of making the *inner Outer*.<sup>4</sup> In *The Education of Man* this phase of life

<sup>1</sup> *The Montessori Method*, Eng. trans., p. 355.

<sup>2</sup> Dewey's doctrine, that activity is always instrumental and not consummatory, is in conflict with the views of Fröbel and Montessori.

<sup>3</sup> Fröbel refers to boyhood—"between the ages of six and eight." Reclam, p. 327; Hailmann, p. 264. Cf. also Reclam, p. 332; Hailmann, p. 267.

<sup>4</sup> *The Education of Man*, Reclam, p. 71; Hailmann, p. 49: "As the senses, body and limbs develop, and the child begins of his own accord to express the inner outwardly the stage of infancy in human development ends and the stage of childhood begins. Up to this stage the inner nature of man is still an undifferentiated, uniform whole. With the emergence of speech begins the expression and representation of the inner nature; differentiation into means and ends in a connected manifold begins."

like the preceding is the concern of the parents,<sup>1</sup> but it was for this pre-school stage that Fröbel devised the Kindergarten. In fact, he even introduced, in addition to the Kindergarten, the Connecting School to mediate between the Kindergarten and the school proper, regarding these as opposites.<sup>2</sup>

Fröbel repeats<sup>3</sup> concerning childhood what he affirmed in dealing with infancy, that whereas each stage in life has a value and significance of its own, the earlier stages acquire greater importance because more succeeds and depends on them. It is thus important to the developing being whether in childhood the environment appears to him noble or base, mean, lifeless, instrumental, for consumption, destruction, or the enjoyment of others, or whether it is regarded as an end in itself, lofty and vivifying, spiritual and divine; whether it is bright or gloomy, ennobling and elevating or humbling and depressing; or whether he sees the object in its true relations or in false and distorted proportions.

The characteristic activities of childhood are language-control and play. To the three aspects of Pestalozzi's *Anschauungsunterricht*—Language, Form, Number—Fröbel thus adds directed play. The child is to observe exactly and designate precisely, not merely the things and objects

<sup>1</sup> Reclam, p. 72; Hailmann, p. 50.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Education by Development*, p. 278: "In the Kindergarten the principal consideration is the child, his nature, and the strengthening, invigorating, developing, drawing out, and educating of the little one; in the school it is just the reverse. Here, in the connecting school, the principal consideration is the object, its nature, the recognition, perception, and comprehension of its properties and relations, and the designation of these properties and relations; the training of the child thus effected is but secondary, incidental and casual."

<sup>3</sup> *The Education of Man*, Reclam, p. 73; Hailmann, p. 51.

themselves, but likewise their essential character and properties. He must correctly denote the relationships of objects in space and time as well as to one another, applying to each its right name, pronouncing each syllable of the word clearly and distinctly. At this stage speech is still one with the speaker, and to the child the designation of the object and the object itself are indistinguishable. The child can as yet no more separate name and object than body and soul ; they are for him one and the same. This is clearly evident in the child's play when he utilises every occasion for speaking. At this stage Play and Speech are the activities in which the child engages ; he even attributes to all objects the powers of life, sensation and speech which he himself possesses, and as he is beginning to represent his inner nature outwardly so he confers on everything in his environment the capacity for so expressing itself.

As the child's life develops in itself, in the family circle and in communion with higher and spiritual powers, so should it develop in contact with Nature, and this is effected through play, by fostering the child's play which at the outset is just its natural life. Thus is Fröbel led to enunciate his well-known warrant for play in education<sup>1</sup> :

Play is the highest achievement of child development, of human development at this stage, since it is<sup>2</sup> the spontaneous expression, according to the necessity of its own nature, of the child's inner being. Play is the purest, most spiritual creation of mankind at this period ; it is at once the pattern and a copy of all human life, of the inner secret life of Nature in men and in all things ; it consequently begets joy, freedom, contentment, repose within and without, peace with the world. In it the

<sup>1</sup> Reclam, p. 75 ; Hailmann, p. 55.

springs of all that is good have their source ; a child that plays heartily, is spontaneously calm, continues steadfastly till physical fatigue ensues will certainly grow up an efficient, tranquil and conscientious man, promoting with the utmost devotion his own welfare and that of others.

Is not the most beautiful sight of child life at this period the child at play ? the child absorbed in his play ? the child that has fallen asleep so thoroughly engrossed was he in his play ?

Play at this period of life is not a trivial pursuit ; it is a serious occupation and has deep significance. In the spontaneously selected games of the child the later inner life lies open to the steadfast penetrating gaze of one who has rightly studied mankind. The games of this age are the seed-leaves of the whole later life, and whether this later life is serene or troubled, placid or boisterous, agitated or pursuing an even tenor, sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought or definitely productive, an aimless gaping or a clear foresight, fashioning or destructive, harmonious or contentious, heralding peace or war, all this depends, due allowance being made for the child's specific innate disposition, upon the individual's mode of life at this age ; on this, too, depends his future relationship to father and mother, brothers, sisters and family, to society and mankind, to Nature and to God.

In pleading that parents should foster the play impulse in their children, that they should afford the necessary facilities, and even allow the children to participate in their adult occupations instead of rebuffing them, Fröbel pens the phrase<sup>1</sup> that later became the motto of the Kindergarten : *Lasst uns unsern Kindern leben*, which in the light of the context might be rendered, "Let us live in sympathy with our children."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Reclam, p. 112; Hailmann, p. 82.

<sup>2</sup> Hailmann, in a footnote (p. 82), indicates, and rightly in our view, that he prefers "Let us live *with* our children ! " to "Let us live *for* our children ! " The second translation might be regarded as supporting that mistaken type of upbringing which, it has been said, provides a paradise for the children, but a veritable hell for the parents or teachers.

To the *Pedagogics of the Kindergarten* we must turn for Fröbel's methodology of play. In this work he expounds the procedure evolved at the institute founded in 1837 at Blankenburg, near Rudolstadt, one of the most beautiful spots in the Thuringian Forest.<sup>1</sup>

As did Pestalozzi in the *Letters to Greaves*, Fröbel adopts the view of the supremacy of the spiritual over the physical, maintaining,<sup>2</sup>

We certainly refer to many of the phenomena of the earliest child life to the striving after physical well-being; whereas, on the contrary, something spiritual is the cause of them. Of course, in the child, as yet, they flow into one another; but there is no question in the healthy little child which of the two ends or poles is most predominant and by which he is most deeply aroused, by spiritual or by merely physical influences.

He also agrees with Comenius and Pestalozzi that self-expression without guidance or control cannot be the aim of education,<sup>3</sup> for—

Respect and love are gained more particularly by the fact that the child is allowed, according to his small strength of body and mind and his limited capacities, to develop early and by himself, yet free, self-active, and independent, always conscious of a superior protection accompanying and watching him, but without feeling the external hand guiding him. For the simple, good-natured child does not want to be left alone and abandoned to himself, but he wants to feel, as it were, the eye and look of the faithful nurse always about him and above him, really always near him.

To assist parents, and children to obtain these highest

<sup>1</sup> Fröbel himself says, *Pedagogics of the Kindergarten*, trans. by Josephine Jarvis, pp. 164-5: "The locality chosen for the institution is situated in a favourable spot, surrounded by rich and beautiful scenery."

<sup>2</sup> *Pedagogics of the Kindergarten*, p. 111.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 113.

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gifts and blessings of life is, he avers,<sup>1</sup> the single aim of his plays and occupations.

It was during the period at Blankenburg, 1837-44, that Fröbel devised the gifts, and that the Kindergarten as we know it, that is, as a Nursery school, was evolved.<sup>2</sup> In the *Pedagogics of the Kindergarten* we find the child is a plant to be tended.<sup>3</sup> This metaphor has a long history in education. Plato, in the *Republic*,<sup>4</sup> says :

In the case of all seeds, and of everything that grows, whether vegetable or animal, we know that whatever fails to find its appropriate nourishment, season and soil, will lack its proper virtues the more in proportion as it is the more vigorous.

Elyot, in *The Gouvernour*,<sup>5</sup> cites the analogy of the gardener:

To the extent that I will declare how such personages may be prepared, I will use the policy of a wise and cunning gardener who purposing to have in his garden a fine and precious herb, that should be to him and all other repairing thereto, excellently commodious or pleasant, he will first search through the garden where he can find the most mellow and fertile earth, and therein will he put the seed of the herb to grow and be nourished, and in most diligent wise attend that no weed should be suffered to grow or approach nigh unto it.

In *The School of Infancy* Comenius repeats<sup>6</sup> :

Whoever has within his house youth exercising themselves in these three departments [Faith and Piety ; Uprightness ; Know-

<sup>1</sup> *Pedagogics of the Kindergarten*, p. 115.

<sup>2</sup> Infant or Nursery schools, as explained in Part II of this work, existed half a century before Frobel originated the Kindergarten.

<sup>3</sup> Pp. 7, 142.

<sup>4</sup> § 491, trans. by Davies and Vaughan.

<sup>5</sup> Everyman edition, p. 18.

<sup>6</sup> P. 11.

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ledge] possesses a garden in which celestial plantlets are sown, watered, bloom and flourish.

And Julie, in *The New Héloïse*, expounding her method, says :

A naughty word in their mouths is a plant or seed foreign to the soil, sown by the vagrant wind ; should I cut it off by a reprimand, it would not fail ere long to shoot forth again. Instead of that, therefore, I look carefully to find its root, and pluck it up. \* I am only (said she, smiling) the servant of the gardener ; I only weed the garden by taking away the vicious plants ; it is for him to cultivate the good ones.

Valuable as this analogy is, it has its defects, and these Bertrand Russell has indicated<sup>1</sup> :

The conception of society as a tree is better than the mould or the machine, but it is still defective. It is to psychology that we must look to supply the deficiency. Psychological constructiveness is a new and special kind, very little understood as yet. It is essential to a right theory of education, politics, and all human affairs.

Fröbel complains, in the *Pedagogics of the Kindergarten*,<sup>2</sup> that the child's occupations as well as the means and objects of such employment are too little recognised in their true, deep significance, are too little comprehended in their general human interest and spirit ; and he pleads<sup>3</sup> :

Would that what is here expressed might contribute to realise the purpose so highly important for the whole life and the clear development of man —viz., to consider the life of the child and the beginnings of its life in its own true, deep significance and subjectivity, as well as in its relation to the totality of life ; to consider childhood as the most important stage of the total

<sup>1</sup> On Education, pp. 115-16.

<sup>2</sup> P. 17.

<sup>3</sup> P. 93.

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development of man and of humanity—indeed, as a stage of the development of the spiritual as such, and of the godlike in the earthly and human.

As with Rousseau and all the idealists of his age—Kant, Fichte, Hegel—Fröbel's aim was to train the child to freedom. He refers<sup>1</sup> to man as “a creative being” and to the child of humanity “struggling from bondage and chains towards freedom”; and says<sup>2</sup>:

“The present effort of mankind in harmony with the phenomena in Nature and the time, with the collective all-life, is an endeavour after freer self-development, after freer self-formation, and freer determinating of one's own destiny.”

Freedom is ~~not~~, however, synonymous with caprice, and the plays and occupations of children should by no means be treated as offering merely means for passing the time, hence only as an outside activity, but rather that by means of such plays and employments the child's innermost nature must be satisfied<sup>3</sup>;

it is likewise not inconsistent with law; the plays were consequently to constitute a coherent whole, “all the parts of which reciprocally explain and mutually benefit one another”; and to follow in methodical sequence—“so that with each is specified what, in general, precedes it, what accompanies it, and what follows it; therefore, on what it is founded, and of what it is itself the foundation”<sup>4</sup>:

Recognising the mediatorial character of play and playthings, we shall no longer be indifferent to the choice, the succession, or the organic connection of the toys we give to children. In those

<sup>1</sup> *Pädagogik des Kindergartens*, pp. 1, 12.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 18.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 19.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 19, 21.

I offer them I shall consider as carefully as possible how the child may, in using them, unfold his nature freely and yet in accordance with law, and how through such use he may also learn to apprehend external things correctly and employ them justly.<sup>1</sup>

Thus we must proceed from the simple to the complex :

The course of plays and means of employment is to begin with that which is simplest and near ; for only that which proceeds from the simplest, smallest, and near can develop from and explain by itself the manifold, great, and distant—can show the spirit of unity.<sup>2</sup>

To these principles of method and even to Fröbel's choice of apparatus—the ball, etc., little or no objection can be taken ; even to the statement<sup>3</sup> that the spirit in which a play is conceived and originated, as well as the spirit in which the plaything is treated and the play played, give to the play its significance and its worth, its efficient value to humanity. But in a wholly unwarrantable fashion Fröbel assumes that the play objects symbolise to the child highly complicated processes and have even a deep metaphysical significance. Thus the movement of the ball symbolises a miner<sup>4</sup> :

"He goes deep down into the shaft."

and "Der Ball ist ein Bild des All," that is, it represents to the child in some mysterious fashion the unity of experience and of the universe. Referring to the contrasted characteristics of the cube and the sphere, Fröbel ventures to assert<sup>5</sup> that it seems as if the child, even at an early age, dimly anticipates in himself the nature and

<sup>1</sup> *Pedagogies of the Kindergarten*, p. 171.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 18.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 34.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 48.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 92.

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destiny of man—to analyse and adjust in himself and in life the opposites of the abiding and quiescent and the movable and moving ; and always, while adjusting, to represent them in life. Fröbel forgets that to the child the ball is merely a ball, just as a primrose by the river's brim was to Peter Bell a primrose, and nothing more. This symbolism has drawn down on Fröbel the wrath of Kilpatrick,<sup>1</sup> whose trenchant criticism is final. Heaven, evidently to Fröbel, lies about us in our infancy, but, as it has been said,<sup>2</sup> “ I am not one of those who see in that a reason why we should lie about Heaven in our old age.”

On the practical side it is the formalism of the system that has evoked criticism. Fröbel himself has issued repeated warnings against a slavish adherence to the gifts and plays ; thus he maintained<sup>3</sup> that the aim of his Kindergarten institution was to make the needs and requirements of the child-world correspond to the present stage of development of humanity, and surely he would not deny to our age the freedom that he claimed for his own. He also warns us<sup>4</sup> that we must not willingly go on with this or that play in opposition to the wish of the child, but always follow the child's circumstances, requirements and needs, and his own expressions of life and activity ; and he reminds<sup>5</sup> us that in the education and training of our children we must be faithful to the requirements of their individual nature. Even the sequence of the gifts is not sacrosanct, for<sup>6</sup> “ what has been up to this point brought forward here in a certain succession will, of course, in the

<sup>1</sup> Fröbel's *Principles Examined*.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Letters of Sir Walter Raleigh*, 1926, vol. I, p. 50.

<sup>3</sup> *Pedagogics of the Kindergarten*, p. 17.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 79.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 16.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 86.

child's play and the events of the nursery and at the children's play-table, be arranged in a different order, and so it should be."

The gifts, too, are not ends in themselves. They, at best, according to Fröbel,<sup>1</sup> furnish norms :

It is quite essential for careful and thinking nurses to consider yet further (and on that account it was rendered prominent with the ball as the first gift) that the sphere and cube, and the expositions of them, only give and are only to give the *norm*; only the *normal fundamental* and *symbolic* perceptions and representations which can also be symbolised in the same way with other objects which the surroundings of life offer, and can be found in them, should be found in them and be explained by them.

Had the earlier Kindergarteners in this country and elsewhere heeded these warnings they would not have brought the system into the discredit under which it for long lay. How far it has freed itself from its earlier formalism may be judged from such works<sup>2</sup> as *Friedrich-Fröbel-Stätten in Schwarzatal*, by Elisabeth Leutheusser, and *Friedrich-Fröbel-Stätten in Schweina-Liebenstein*, by Käte Heintze.

Fröbel's hope was that the gifts might be introduced into the existing infant schools where the children were too little employed, or not judiciously employed—that is to say, not self-active enough,<sup>3</sup> and no neater tribute to his work could be penned than the words of one of his most incisive critics<sup>4</sup>—“A school for the young without books is Fröbel's chiefest glory.”

<sup>1</sup> *Pedagogics of the Kindergarten*, p. 96.

<sup>2</sup> Published by Herman Bohlaus Nachfolger, Weimar, 1927.

<sup>3</sup> *Pedagogics of the Kindergarten*, pp. 160-1.

<sup>4</sup> W. H. Kilpatrick, *Montessori Examined*, n. 81.



MADAME MONTESSORI.

## M. MONTESSORI

1870—

MADAME MONTESSORI's contribution to infant education can be most easily expressed in the words of her critics, who have in the most generous, even extravagant, terms extolled her work. Kilpatrick<sup>1</sup> has applauded her break with tradition:

We should not fail to call attention to an evidence of scientific attitude and faith too seldom found in the teaching world—be it said to our shame. Few in the history of education have been capable of breaking so completely with the surrounding school tradition as has this Italian physician. To set aside tradition for science is no common achievement. That the innovator is a woman will seem to some all the more remarkable. With the true scientific spirit of experimentation Madame Montessori has devised a practice and an institution. Such a consciously scientific creation stands in marked contrast with the conservatism and mystical obscurantism which but too widely characterise Kindergarten education in England, America and elsewhere. Whatever opinion he held as to the success of the effort, no one can fail to approve Madame Montessori's thorough-going attempt to found a complete school procedure upon her highest scientific conceptions.

Her doctrine of liberty for the child meets with his approval<sup>2</sup>:

<sup>1</sup> *Montessori Examined*, pp. 13-14.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 38-9.

It is difficult to escape the conclusion, from whatever stand-point we view the situation, that the relatively free expression of the child's natural impulses—safeguarded, as discussed—is the efficient plan for his proper rearing. Such freedom is necessary if the child is to enter with full zest into actual co-operation, and into the acquisition of those habits of knowledge and skill which are properly to be expected. The same freedom is necessary if he is to grow into adequate self-reliance, and at the same time, into the adequate control of self in the appreciation of the rights of others. From such considerations we highly approve Madame Montessori's re-emphasis on the doctrine of liberty. In the practical outworking of her idea she has set an example to home, to kindergarten, and to primary school. There must be less of doing for the child where he can do for himself; less of short-period programme, where interest is too highly excited only to be too soon dissipated; less of minute direction by mother, kindergartner, or teacher;—in short, more of opportunity for the child to lead a simple, healthy, normal life.

Auto-education, a condition of the child's liberty, is likewise commended by Kilpatrick<sup>1</sup>:

It is impossible not to sympathise with Madame Montessori's intention in emphasising this notion of auto-education. The more fully the child can learn from his own experience without any telling from the teacher, the more fully is his knowledge his own. If he can feel for himself the problem, if he can work out for himself a plan of solution, and if finally he can ascertain by test of his own that his solution is correct—if these results can be attained from any plan, then surely that plan is a good one.

In *Psychology of Early Childhood*,<sup>2</sup> Stern speaks approvingly, sometimes even enthusiastically, of certain aspects of the Montessori system. He concedes that the method is in agreement with modern child psychology in so far as it emphasises the principle of the child's freedom which can

<sup>1</sup> *Montessori Examined*, pp. 48–9.

<sup>2</sup> Eng. trans. by Anna Barwell.

be utilised quite otherwise than in the usual Kindergarten methods of self-education and development. He also admits that she offers as her new contribution a splendid method, free from all force of mechanical drill, of training the child's elementary powers. She is commended, too, because she has availed herself of the technique and apparatus of experimental psychology, utilising "psychological experiment for purposes of practice." Stern even qualifies his condemnation of the sensory-training material by admitting<sup>1</sup> that his

criticism must not be understood to mean that the exercises of the Montessori occupations ought to be entirely banished from the child's education in early years ; we are only opposed to their being made the chief aim and object of early activity, and to such emphasis being laid on practice of doubtful value. Their worth as increasing the possibilities of children's games and occupations must not be overlooked, and when these are used side by side with all other toys and gifts, and not handled exclusively from a didactic point of view, they may prove a source of profit and pleasure for children.

It should be noted, too, that Stern maintains that in many of the employments the child "is doubtless freer than in many Fröbel occupations, with their extensive regulations and restrictions."

The Russian philosopher, Sergius Hessen,<sup>2</sup> in spite of his condemnation of the Montessori pedagogy, extols the fascinating and inspiring personality of Montessori, her undogmatic investigating spirit, her readiness to confess her own failures ; he attributes to her thorough acquaint-

<sup>1</sup> 1924 English translation, p. 228.

<sup>2</sup> Cited by K. Gerhard, *Zur Beurteilung der Montessori-Pädagogik*, Verlag von Quelle & Meyer in Leipzig, 1928, p. 4.

ance with the mind of the child, the capacity to observe children, and the discernment of the reflective teacher—but only in the sense that with her personally all this counteracts the danger of her educational method. "Like Stern he would not altogether proscribe the Montessori apparatus; the education of the senses, so perfected by Montessori, he concedes, is no unnecessary and empty discovery, provided it is subordinated to the true aims of education. From these citations it is evident that Montessori is surely justified of her critics.▼

That the doctrines of Montessori and Fröbel are incompatible is a common, but unfortunate, assumption in this country, whereas were Fröbel alive to-day he would doubtless be the first to acknowledge that the Montessori system, both philosophically and pedagogically, is a natural development of his own system. Fröbel's idealism was somewhat imperfect. Just as, for Rousseau, man was good but society evil, and man's ideal nature could be realised only apart from society, so Fröbel tended to regard nature as the antithesis of spirit. Since Fröbel's day idealism has become more comprehensive, the antithesis between the natural and the spiritual has been transcended and has given place to emphasis on the synthesis between them, and the advance of science has become the progressive revelation of the spiritual nature of the universe. The background of M. Montessori's thought and work is a spiritual realism or a modern idealism, and from what we can infer from Fröbel's thought we are convinced that he would have seen in this new philosophy the logical outcome of his own views.

The spiritual basis of M. Montessori's doctrines has

been obscured by the too facile inference that, belonging to the medical profession, she must necessarily be a naturalist in philosophy. Thus Hessen contends that Montessori is throughout dominated by a narrow Sensualism and Naturalism associated with a superstitious reverence for natural science, and as a result her system can never attain to the apprehension of the whole other than as a mere sum of parts, and completely ignores the proper aim of education. This Naturalism, quite intelligible in the case of a doctor or physiologist, has undoubtedly made it possible for her, he admits, to appreciate properly the "psychological function" of play—as a preparatory training for the individual sensory and motor organs, and for the first time to provide a scientifically constructed material for children's play, but it has prevented her from grasping the most important feature, namely, the *philosophical* nature of the child's play.

To support our contention that a physiologist does not necessarily adopt a mechanistic interpretation of experience, we need only cite Professor J. S. Haldane, who, in his *Materialism, The Philosophical Basis of Biology* and other works, has done more than any other living writer to contest the naturalistic assumptions in philosophy.

Although his method may have failed to achieve his aim and his gifts proved a hindrance rather than a help, most of Fröbel's educational principles are identical with those on which modern infant education is based, and, as we have indicated in the last chapter, he fully realised that developments in his educational practices were possible; he even suggested that "other objects which the surroundings of life offer" might be employed in the Kindergarten, and he

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would doubtless have welcomed the Montessori apparatus and accepted it as satisfying his requirements.

The Montessori system is a development of the work of Itard<sup>1</sup> and Seguin<sup>2</sup> with mental deficient, and the origin of the system has doubtless influenced both the method and the material adopted. The method is psychological, consequently individual; the training must meet the child's present needs. The transgression of this principle is obvious with pupils of low mentality. For such pupils, too, the processes must be analysed and simplified, hence the emphasis on sensory training, the isolated activities of the practical exercises, the postponement of verbal teaching. As the system is still in process of development many of the omissions to which early critics directed attention have now been made good, for example, religion<sup>3</sup>; others were merely *a priori* criticisms or the result of the critics observing only incomplete applications of the system and neglecting to acquaint themselves with Madame Montessori's own writings. The order of exposition in the published works has also by some been mistakenly assumed to be the pedagogical order.

Liberty for the child is Montessori's aim in education, but it is as with Rousseau "a well-regulated liberty"; the freedom which she advocates is not a freedom from physical necessities and social restraints, but a freedom which implies mastery over the environment and the self. She does not propose to "set the children free" merely that

<sup>1</sup> Jean-Marc Gaspard Itard, *The Wild Boy of Aveyron* (*Rapports et Mémoires sur le Savage de l'Aveyron*), trans. by George and Muriel Humphrey (Appleton).

<sup>2</sup> E. Seguin, *Idiocy and its Treatment by the Physiological Method* (Columbia University Teachers College Educational Reprints, No. 2, 1927).

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *The Child in the Church*, by Maria Montessori (London, Sands & Co., 1929).

they in turn should enslave the adult community, but rather that they may be made independent of it. Hence from the outset she introduces auto-education, the teacher's function, as Sir T. Percy Nunn has put it,<sup>1</sup> being restricted to standing-by in the nautical sense ; the teacher's art consists, not merely in recognising when to intervene, but rather in the more difficult task of refraining from intervention. Montessori would aid the child's development by providing him with an environment adjusted physically and psychologically to his stage of growth.<sup>2</sup> The environment should afford the means of auto-education, and she maintains, in opposition to the project method, that these means cannot be taken "at random." To make the process one of self-education, it is not enough that the stimulus should call forth activity ; it must also direct it. The social aspect of the environment is not ignored, as has sometimes been asserted, for some exercises are group activities, for example,<sup>3</sup> the game of silence, simple gymnastics, free games, religious exercises ; and in the serving of meals, waiting at table, etc., social service is taught.

The special apparatus constituting the prepared environment comprises the material for practical activities, for sensory training and for the didactic exercises.<sup>4</sup> Kilpatrick<sup>5</sup> looks with favour upon the practical life activities ; he admits—"these undoubtedly offer expression to a side of

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Education : Its Data and First Principles*, ch. viii—"The 'Play-Way' in Education."

<sup>2</sup> Cf. M. Montessori, *Advanced Method*, ch. iii.

Note that freedom for Frobel is necessitated by an ideal nature or endowment : for Montessori, by an ideal environment. <sup>3</sup> *The Montessori Method*, pp. 119-20.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. M. Montessori, *The Montessori Method* ; also *A Scottish Montessori School*, by A Sister of Notre Dame (London, Sands & Co., 1932).

<sup>5</sup> *Montessori Examined*, p. 44.

child nature too often left unsatisfied. To do something that counts in real life, not simply in the play world, is frequently one of the keenest pleasures to a child"; and "the general idea of including among the school exercises such occupations as are mainly valuable from demands of immediate utility is one that proves attractive." It is rather tragic that it is just these activities, for example, the exercises with the dressing-frames, that may have to be first discarded as socially valueless; the variety which they exhibit could have been conceived only by a woman, and yet it is that fickle jade, Fashion, with her introduction of artificial silk and Zip fasteners, who is fast rendering them obsolete. A more serious objection to the didactic activities is that for the intelligent child they have been over-simplified and his interest in them is too easily exhausted; a girl's attention will be more effectively engaged and a more thorough training assured by dressing and undressing a doll. The common toys nevertheless fail to exhibit one essential feature of the auto-didactic material, namely, the device which secures that they should be self-corrective, that the successful accomplishment of the task should be readily recognised by the child himself.

Considerable controversy has been occasioned by the sensory training material and exercises. Kilpatrick<sup>1</sup> criticises the exercises in these terms:

Madame Montessori's doctrine of sense-training is based on an out-worn and cast-off psychological theory; the didactic apparatus devised to carry this theory into effect is in so far worthless; what little value remains to the apparatus could be got from the sense-experiences incidental to properly directed play with wisely chosen, but less expensive and more childlike playthings.

<sup>1</sup> *Montessori Examined*, p. 72.

There is undoubtedly considerable justification in the writings of Madame Montessori for this criticism. Her language throughout *The Montessori Method* assumes the validity of the doctrine of formal training ; she does not seem to be acquainted with the great body of experimental evidence which calls in question the assumptions on which this doctrine has generally relied. But her practice is better here than her psychology, and quite another interpretation can be put upon her sensory-training exercises which will render them consistent with recent psychological advances, of which even Kilpatrick could not have been aware when he indicted his criticism.

The sensory apparatus likewise meets with Kilpatrick's<sup>1</sup> condemnation : it "affords singularly little variety . . . it presents a limited series of exactly distinct and very precise activities, formal in character and very remote from social interests and connections." And he adds : "so narrow and limited a range of activity cannot go far in satisfying the normal child." The full significance of the apparatus we reserve for later consideration ; here we would merely point out that one has only to compare the full range of the Montessori apparatus with such apparatus as is available to the child in the traditional infant room to recognise the superiority of the Montessori apparatus. Its very simplicity may be a recommendation ; Kilpatrick's assumption, that social activities of a complicated nature are the only exercises adapted to the child, may be questioned ; whether the Montessori sensory-training exercises are satisfying to the normal child can be determined only by actual trial.

<sup>1</sup> *Montessori Examined*, p. 41.

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Stern's critique has been referred to before this to the reader of *Infant Education*, and are summed up in the statement that "Montessori's main thesis is rather in direct accordance with our traditional apprehension." In my opinion this view is not correct.<sup>1</sup> The basic idea is based on the notion of the constitutive power involved in sensory training exercise, and on the underlying psychology, a "psychology of elements," which assumes that our perception consists of the "united lot's isolation elements." To this he opposes the view that the *Gestalt* is the fundamental unit of the cognitive object of the mental life. The term *Gestalt* is usually translated "form" or "configuration." But for its inspired contrast with "function" we should prefer to employ as the English equivalent of *Gestalt* the term "structure," or, but for its fairly intimate connotation, the term "system." According to the *Gestalt* psychologist the ultimate analysis of cognitive apprehension reveals, not sensory elements as the old school of psychology assumed, nor an undifferentiated continuum, as Ward and James contended, but sometimes of the nature of a simple sensory system—entities apprehended against a background.<sup>2</sup> Stern's desire to rest in keeping the *Gestalt* view in preference to the receptionist view. His improvement of it as the basis of his system of the Montessori sensory exercises could be quite had in two respects. It was only in the third German edition (1923) of his own work that Stern introduced the new view—"the origin of sense

<sup>1</sup> See Dr. L. Stern's New Work, section 1, p. 11, 1923, and Dr. L. Stern's article in the *Journal of Educational Psychology*, Vol. 14, No. 1, 1923.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. K. Koffka, *The Growth of Mind*.

processes must receive different treatment which has  
the effect of contact with former sensory and motor  
experience more directly than before the introduction of  
'Gestalt' and 'Association' psychology.<sup>1</sup> It is conse-  
quently most useful to consider Montessori for a  
moment in her work as carried at least ten years  
earlier.<sup>2</sup> If, too, the fundamental aspect of the exercise  
process is the *Gestalt*, then any perceptual training must  
proceed from the *Gestalt*, and Steiner's own con-  
clusions apply to the Montessori exercises, not  
only to the psychological explanation of them which  
M. Montessori has offered. At almost all the Montessori  
exercises involve the recognition of perceptual  
relationships, they consequently imply *Gestalt*. Con-  
sider, for instance, as argued by Steiner,<sup>3</sup> that the  
Montessori exercises are consistent with the  
*Gestalt* psychology, proceeds to show that they are also  
carried in a surprising manner with the "in-built" principle  
of "it" or behaviour on which K. Bäuerle, in his *Die  
soziale Entwicklung des Kindes* (1930), has relied  
so much. Clearly exemplified in the experiments which  
Luria describes,<sup>4</sup> I would have been delighted  
to see Montessori's demonstration of an educational law: "A  
man always tends to what interests him". A person aged  
one year old can do Montessori exercises of exercise "wooden  
cubes" or "Arch-exercise" without developing an  
interest which is required, or which he "fails to find" in the

<sup>1</sup> See my article "The Psychology of M. Montessori", in *The Journal of Education*, 1930, pp. 18, 314 ff. seq.

situation set by the material ; it would likewise show that the problem is solved, not by chance, or trial-and-error, but with "insight," the understanding preceding the solution ; the pieces of apparatus acquire functional values ; in the early phases of the activity there is involved the schematic anticipation of the succeeding phases, and the process is one of autonomous completion ; no externally applied stimulus is required in the performance of the task. The whole experience, as Gerhards contends, is *gestaltet*.

An objection urged by Stern which has been more flattered by popular repetition is that the child's freedom is restricted by the construction of the sensory material and the demand that only one method of using it is permitted. Stern's statement demands quotation.<sup>1</sup> Referring to the exercises with the cylindrical insets he says :

But then we are told : 'As soon as the child can place with apparent surety every rod in its proper place, he has outgrown these exercises, and *this material is of no more value to the child.*' Here is a plain statement that these cylinders are only meant to serve the one purpose, designed by Mme. Montessori ; the fundamental fact that it is the little child's special gift to make everything out of everything is disregarded. What then if the child playing with this pierced board should hit upon the quite un-Montessorian idea to look upon the fattest rod as papa, the next as mama, the rest as the children, and so to play with them ? Or to put the cylinder rods under the board to roll it along like a train ? In the whole book we never read a word of such independent actions, although these games are the first that are really free, that is, not prescribed by the teacher's intentions.

It should be remarked that the child is not conscious of the restraint, for it is the material, not the teacher, that

<sup>1</sup> *Psychology of Early Childhood*, pp. 233-4.

prescribes the task. Such a restriction to the one method of solution imposed by the material is necessary for the auto-education of the child. Alternative solutions would necessitate the intervention of the teacher to decide which was the correct one, and the child would thereby be deprived of the satisfaction of realising that he has solved the problem unaided. The sequence of the exercises is not dictated by the teacher ; the exercise is self-selected, and it is here that the Montessori procedure scores over traditional methods of teaching.

Montessori deliberately adopted the exercises as games, not to provide the child with "practice," as Stern assumes ; in selecting an instrument to attain her end she recognised that it should not weary, but should divert the child,<sup>1</sup> and she affirms that the normal child takes spontaneously a lively interest in the exercises. She does not hesitate to define what she regards as an educational game : "It must be made clear that we understand by this term a free activity ordered to a definite end, not disorderly noise which distracts the attention."<sup>2</sup> The game is to solve the problem set by the material, and the analogy of a jig-saw puzzle, or any game with its set laws, easily disposes of Stern's objection. M. Montessori explains how the child, appreciating the task, sets about its performance, correcting himself when he fails ; "indeed, it is precisely in these errors that the educational importance of the didactic material lies, and when the child with evident security places each piece in its proper place, he has outgrown the exercise, and this piece of material becomes useless to him."<sup>3</sup> But normal children repeat such exercises many times, Montessori

<sup>1</sup> *The Montessori Method*, p. 168.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 180.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 171.

observes, just as children repeat the solution of a jig-saw puzzle, not, however, at the bidding of the teacher, or "for practice," but for their own satisfaction and enjoyment. The child's trouble is indeed to prevent the teacher from "helping," as it is to keep his parents from playing with his toys. To employ the sensory-training apparatus for any other purpose than that for which it is devised would appear as meaningless to the child as to use the pieces of a jig-saw puzzle for some other game.

"That the child is not restricted to purely formal material is evident from the fact that modelling and pottery work are mentioned by Montessori, and "above the blackboards are hung attractive pictures chosen carefully, representing simple scenes in which children would naturally be interested."<sup>1</sup>

The success attending the didactic exercises of writing, reading, counting, etc., has to a large extent silenced criticism; even Stern<sup>2</sup> has to admit that Montessori "has succeeded along these experimental paths in perfecting certain accomplishments—such as writing or calculating—in children of certainly no more than average powers long before the usual school-age." To the objection, that these didactic exercises lead to the premature introduction of formal school subjects, it can be retorted that they came in the development of the Montessori method unsought, their emergence being for Montessori herself a psychological discovery.

The very absorption of the child in the exercises has cast doubt on their play value, but the characteristics of play

<sup>1</sup> *The Montessori Method*, p. 82.

<sup>2</sup> *Psychology of Early Childhood*, p. 43; cf. pp. 179-80, 435-6.

are that the activity must be self-selected, not dictated by another, and the activity must be an end in itself. The Montessori exercises satisfy both these requirements, and the concentration of the child is the highest testimonial that can be paid to the choice of material; a child wholly absorbed in his play was to Fröbel the most beautiful sight of childhood.

The criticism of the Montessori method, on which Fröbelians have generally harped, is its failure to develop the imagination. Kilpatrick<sup>1</sup> has referred to this failure to provide for the imaginative activity of the child—“There is very little of dramatization. On the whole, the imagination, whether of constructive play or of the more æsthetic sort, is but little utilised.” Kilpatrick, it should be recalled, has condemned Fröbel for a too free use of imagination in his symbolism. Charging the Montessori system with a bias to intellectuality Stern asks<sup>2</sup>:

What of all those activities which cannot be directly transmitted into training of observation and intellectuality; that confabulation and imagining by means of speech or drawing, those games with dolls or personations, the looking at pictures and singing games?

Hessen adopts an extreme standpoint. According to his philosophical theory of the child's play,<sup>3</sup> all human activity originates in fantasy, and with the outer and inner growth of the child is gradually transformed from play into work. The little child can generally be active only in play, as he lives merely in the present, and the ends of his actions are not yet capable of being separated from this

<sup>1</sup> *Montessori Examined.*

<sup>2</sup> Eng. trans., first edition, 1924, p. 32.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. K. Gerhards, *Zur Beurteilung der Montessori-Pädagogik*, p. 4 et seq.

activity itself; gradually, however, his fantasy-images gain in complexity and steadfastness, acquire concrete embodiment, separate themselves from the activity itself and become entrenched in reality, that is, appear as work. This process is also associated with an extension of the child's mental horizon, and through it is expressed the growth of his personality.

Montessori, according to Hessen, seeks to annul from the outset the play fantasy of the child, instead of overcoming it in the manner indicated by him. She thereby destroys the only form of activity that is possible to the little child, who can consequently find no avenue of approach from his own standpoint to the Montessori occupations, since these are not supported by his fantasy-play. Still less can the child sustain them as ends inwardly present. His activity consequently degenerates into mere blind imitation of what is put before him, and his personality, instead of developing, is devastated. Hessen complains that in other respects Montessori removes everything that might nourish the imagination of the child, allow his personality to grow, and mediate to him symbolically the cultural values—the fairy tale, imaginative play, musical dance, etc.; anything other than a mechanical unity and monotonous harmony is possible only in the play of a Fröbel Kindergarten. His ideal of the true Kindergartener is one who as an artist in her subject, copies no system at all, makes indeed the most of the experiences of others, but above all is self-creative and possesses a philosophical as well as a psychological training.

The view that fantasy is the primary mental activity of the child has little psychological support. Boudouin, in

his *Suggestion and Autosuggestion*,<sup>1</sup> refers to Delbœuf's view that in an earlier stage of evolution "the living being was fully aware of all that went on within. Owing to division of labour, its attention was increasingly directed outwards, and the supervision of the inner world was left to the subconscious." The primacy of fantasy in the child's mental development might be regarded as a recapitulation of the earlier stage of evolution postulated by Delbœuf, and it is as such that Montessori condemns it in her chapter on "Imagination" in *The Advanced Montessori Method*,<sup>2</sup> contending<sup>3</sup>: "This savage stage is transient, and must be suppressed, education *should help the child to overcome it*; it should not develop the savage state, nor keep the child therein." Psycho-analysis has taught us the dangers of pandering to the "pleasure" principle of Freud, and Gerhards quotes Stern to this effect<sup>4</sup>:

For the more man learns to grasp the hard fact of reality, the more conscious is he of its compelling, constricting power. The little child, meeting hindrances on every side, so dependent on grown-ups in its real activity, may well have some more or less indefinable sense of this oppressive power, and seeks freedom from it by flight into the world of imagination where he is lord and master—aye, in very truth, moulder and creator. Moreover, the stronger the illusion by means of which he loses himself in a life of his own creation, the stronger his feeling of liberation and the greater his pleasure.

And Morgan adds<sup>5</sup>:

It is fine to have a good imagination; but normal adjustment means facing reality, and the more time and energy spent in the

<sup>1</sup> Eng. trans., p. 273.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. I, ch. ix.

<sup>3</sup> P. 252.

<sup>4</sup> *Psychology of Early Childhood*, pp. 276-7.

<sup>5</sup> *The Psychology of the Unadjusted School Child*, p. 56.

world of phantasy, the less capable one becomes of meeting an actual difficulty when it does appear. People who become excessive day-dreamers may progress to the extreme that leads to somnambulisms or sleepwalkings, double personalities, and hysterias.

It is also pertinent to ask, Is there no romance in the reality of to-day or is it merely that we have lost the capacity to discern it?

To counteract this flight from reality Montessori has simplified the child's environment to enable him to master it gradually and thus acquire confidence and power to overcome in the conflict which inevitably awaits him.

Critics who are afraid to trust themselves on the treacherous shoals of the psychology of imagination attack Montessori for rejecting the fairy tale. In relegating it to late childhood she is in agreement with Rousseau, who maintained that man may be taught by fables, but children require the naked truth.<sup>1</sup> This rejection is likewise but a corollary to her general principle of auto-education, for the introduction of the fairy tale demands the presence of the teacher. The main task of the young child from the psychological point of view is to reconcile himself to reality. In presenting to him fairy tales with their unnatural happenings we are merely introducing confusion into the order to which he is laboriously reducing the events of his mental life, just as when we employ baby-language in talking to a child. He is dissociating these events into the subjective or purely individual and the real or objective—what is common to all, and by introducing fairy tales we are confusing the issues. In "The Psycho-

<sup>1</sup> *Emile*, Everyman trans., p. 77.

logical Case Against the Fairy Tale,"<sup>1</sup> the writer quotes Overstreet as follows :

People have the curious notion that fairy tales build up the imaginative life of children. As a matter of fact they pervert the imaginative life. Fairy tales are a left-over of primitive "science." The savage has no notion, or only the vaguest notion, of cause and effect. His world was largely one of magic. Things happen by miracle. A "presto," an "open sesame," and the trick was turned. It has taken the world uncounted thousands of weary years to get beyond that primitive state of mind. Most of the degrading misconceptions that man has had about his life, here and hereafter, arose out of this inability to detect cause and effect.

And now parents insist on inflicting this primitivism, this pathetic infantilism of the race, on the children, forcing them to think uncausally, magically, miraculously, forcing them to habituate themselves to the technique of dreamy wish-fulfilment rather than guiding them into the noble technique of observation, experiment and objective achievement.

The mind of the child should be carefully guarded against the fantasizing which cuts itself loose from the objective realities as an adult should be guarded against the morbid daydreaming that may lead to neurosis and insane delusion.

There are more things under heaven and on earth than are dreamed of in any of the fairy tales. The real world is a marvel, as fascinating to the child as to the adult. Introduce the child vividly, interestingly, to that world, and we stir his imagination into life—his real imagination, not that sorry substitute for imagination that cowers in terror of witches and werewolves or gloats with triumphant joy over riches and power achieved without effort.

It may also be remarked that Addington Bruce, in *Handicaps of Childhood*, has devoted a chapter to "Fairy

<sup>1</sup> By H. E. Wheeler, *The Elementary School Journal*, June 1929, vol. XXIX, No. 10, pp. 754-5.

Tales that Handicap." Montessori is thus not without psychological support in her rejection of the fairy tale.

Montessori does nevertheless reserve a place for imagination, but it is the creative imagination which objectifies itself in universal products like science, art, morality, religion; "modern man by the method of positive science seems to have found the secret trace of thought which puts him in the divine path"<sup>1</sup>; "in addition to the work of observing material reality, there is a creative work which lifts man up from earth and transports him into a higher world which every soul may attain within its individual limits"<sup>2</sup>; "religion is not a product of fantastic imagination, it is the greatest of realities, the one truth to the religious man. It is the fount and basis of life."<sup>3</sup> The difference between Montessori and her critics is ultimately one of different philosophies of life. Both make freedom their aim, but whereas Montessori seeks and finds it in the world of truth and reality, her critics seek freedom from the world. Their idealism is imperfect; the world is regarded by them as material and alien, whereas in Montessori's spiritual realism there is nothing common or unclean; nature is "the living robe of Deity," and for Montessori a worthy garment. And of those who call Fröbel their master and yet condemn Montessori, we might ask—Have they allowed the vision, splendid of a truly spiritual reality to which *The Education of Man* is but a commentary to fade into the light of common day?

<sup>1</sup> *The Advanced Montessori Method*, vol. I, p. 242.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 245.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 267.



"To learn  
has been

ing the pragmatic view in the statement that "the conception of truth in its traditional form has no validity, and the truth is only what it is convenient to believe," he observes :

If this be the case, truth can be determined by act of Parliament. Leigh Hunt found it to be inconvenient to believe that the Prince Regent was fat, since his opinion caused him to be incarcerated. It follows the Prince Regent was thin. It is difficult in such a case as this to accept the pragmatists' philosophy. One can hardly resist the conviction that there is something objectively and absolutely true about the proposition that the Prince Regent was fat. . . . It cannot be seriously maintained that such a proposition is true because it is convenient to believe it, or false through the fact that it is criminal to utter it.

Discarding the moral law as an "antecedent existence" illegitimately assumed by the idealist, the pragmatist must have recourse to social approval as the criterion of the rightness of an action ; customs, he tells us,<sup>1</sup> constitute moral standards," and "whatever is good or bad is a matter of group opinion."<sup>2</sup> The history of the martyrs is a sufficient refutation of this shallow philosophy ; it may nevertheless be mentioned that primitive communities are the most highly socialised and yet the least moralised of all types of human association ; socialisation with them spells stagnation.<sup>3</sup> In the *Modern Movement*

<sup>1</sup> *The Quest for Certainty*, p. 47.

<sup>2</sup> A. C. Bowden and I. C. Clarke, *To-Morrow's Americans*, p. 45.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. R. Eucken, *Main Currents of Modern Thought*, Eng. trans., p. 401 : "To begin with, morality itself is something other than its visible representative, social order ; and moral conduct is not identical with social correctness. On the highest levels of moral creation this correctness has been but little valued. The idea of making the mere means into the dominating aim has been decisively rejected."

H. Rugg, in *Culture and Education in America*, says of James and Dewey (p. 219) : "Consistently, throughout their writings they have tended to magnify the im-

*in Art*<sup>1</sup> R. H. Wilenski points the moral in regard to art :

All original artists, I am certain, have always worked without reference to their work's effect on spectators other than themselves ; and they have always assumed that their work has intrinsic value when they themselves have honestly and competently passed it as exactly the thing they have set out to do. No original artist could go on working but for this assumption, since as we all know, the reception first afforded to original works of art by other spectators is generally in the nature of apathy, derision or abuse.

The religious believer would reject with disdain an object of worship, deprived, as it would be by the pragmatist, of its infinite, eternal and unchangeable features. The pragmatist's world has thus no place for culture, for knowledge for its own sake ; art for art's sake has no significance for him ; the moral law, the inexorable conception of duty, evokes in him no awe and reverence, as it did in Kant ; and religion he can only ignore. The educational philosophy that results is the very antithesis to that of Comenius, Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Fröbel and Montessori.

The positive contention of the pragmatists is that truth is instrumental, a means not an end ; goodness is likewise provisional. The idealist, contrariwise, maintains that everything cannot be a means, that there must exist some absolute satisfactions ; that in truth, beauty, goodness and holiness the ultimate nature of existence is disclosed ; importance of group and to minimise the rôle of the individual" ; and on p. 228 he adds : "It is clear, however, that the emphatic stress upon social adjustment as the chief aim and process of education merely serves to deepen the rut of conformity in which most of us move."

<sup>1</sup> P. xiii.

through them man reaches to the heart of reality ; in them the Divine reveals Himself most fully. The fallacy involved in the infinite regress of instrumental values has been indicated by Bertrand Russell,<sup>1</sup> who is not an idealist in philosophy :

Sometimes a long chain of results is necessary before the final result is reached which can be called simply "good." A plough is useful because it breaks up the ground. But breaking up the ground is not good on its own account : it is in turn merely useful because it enables seed to be sown. This is useful because it produces grain, which is useful because it produces bread, which is useful because it preserves life. But life must be capable of some intrinsic value : if life were merely useful as a means to other life, it would not be useful at all. Life may be good or bad according to circumstances ; it may therefore also be useful, when it is a means to good life. Somewhere we must get beyond the chain of successive utilities, and find a peg from which the chain is to hang ; if not, there is no real usefulness in any link of the chain.

Bertrand Russell's contention recalls Kant's practical imperative<sup>2</sup> : " So act as to treat humanity, whether in thine own person or in that of any other, in every case as an end withal, never as means only." Apart from the ultimate spiritual values, there are many minor activities which are ends-in-themselves, have intrinsic worth and are not merely instrumental to other values, for example, playing a game, occupying oneself with a hobby, reading a novel, appreciating works of art,<sup>3</sup> music or poetry ; they are, to employ Dewey's term, consummatory.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *On Education*, pp. 19-20.

<sup>2</sup> *Metaphysic of Morals*.

<sup>3</sup> It may be remarked that, as many an article loses its utilitarian or instrumental value, its æsthetic value appears to appreciate.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. H. Rugg, *Culture and Education in America*, ch. xii, " Science and Sanctity."

"To learn by doing" is characteristic of animal learning, whereas man learns also by reflection or contemplation, and above all by the experience of others. Considering animal behaviour as typical of all forms of life, the pragmatist adopts the biological or naturalistic interpretation of human nature; he accepts the view that, to quote the words of Sir T. Percy Nunn,<sup>1</sup> "whatever explanation we give of the broad facts of life must apply, in principle, equally to body and mind," and which "sees in the phenomena of conscious life but the highest manifestation of properties that permeate all organisms through and through." In *Human Nature and Conduct*<sup>2</sup> Dewey states the issue thus :

The question fundamentally at issue is nothing more or less than whether moral values, regulations, principles and objects form a separate and independent domain or whether they are part and parcel of a normal development of a life process.

Dewey accepts the second alternative, and in his chapter on "Affective Thought in Logic and Painting"<sup>3</sup> he explains :

Recent advances in some fundamental generalisations regarding biological functions in general and those of the nervous system in particular have made possible a definite conception of continuous development from the lower functions to the higher.

Our greatest living biologists nevertheless reject this conclusion and protest against the biological interpretation of human experience. They profess that they can find no biological equivalents of or counterparts to such human

<sup>1</sup> *Education: Its Data and First Principles*, pp. 13, 46.

<sup>2</sup> P. 185.

<sup>3</sup> *Art and Education*, p. 64.

interests as art, morality and religion. Thus Professor J. S. Haldane declares<sup>1</sup>:

Biology does not deal with personality, nor with values." The science which deals with them is psychology; and we cause confusion if we fail to distinguish biology from psychology, just as we cause confusion by failing to distinguish biology from physical science.

And Herbert S. Jennings, writing on "The Biology of Children in Relation to Education," draws the educational corollary, contending<sup>2</sup> that there is no organism that differs so much from other organisms as do human beings, and that the things that are of most importance about children must be known from a study of children, rather than from a study of other organisms. Although the complaint cannot be laid to Dewey's charge, the adoption of the biological standpoint has adversely affected Education through the emphasis which it leads psychology to place on the instincts and the unconscious. Psychology is so preoccupied with the least desirable aspects of human nature that it finds no time for the consideration of higher values and the moral order without which the unconscious would not exist; instead of the unconscious explaining art, morality or religion, it is the existence of these that creates the unconscious—the animals are not afflicted with complexes nor suffer from neuroses. The idealistic interpretation of human experience, on the contrary, stresses the general tendencies in the child's endowment which are modifiable through social, including educational, influences,

<sup>1</sup> *Materialism*, p. 84.

<sup>2</sup> *Suggestions of Modern Science Concerning Education*, p. 6.

and the higher mental processes peculiar to man—reasoning, willing, etc.

Dewey does nevertheless distinguish between the learning by doing of animals and the learning by doing of human individuals, and for this reason it is advisable to distinguish his doctrine from Naturalism by designating it Pragmatic Instrumentalism or Experimentalism. Pragmatic Instrumentalism regards the method of the mechanical or industrial sciences, chiefly the method of experiment, as applicable to intellectual discovery, ethical conduct, and as providing the key to the riddle of existence.<sup>1</sup> The assumption that all thinking is of the problematic type<sup>2</sup> is unjustified; many properties of the figures in geometry, and even some of the laws in physics, have been discovered by deduction, not by experiment; in astronomy we can improve the methods of observation but we cannot experiment, that is, control the conditions; the geneticists admit that however much they would like to make experiments in human breeding, society would not tolerate these; and the saints learned not by doing but by prayer and meditation. The ultimate principles of art, morality and religion cannot be determined by experiment, but only by the methods of philosophy.

In education, while the method of experiment is inapplicable in such subjects as mathematics and the appreciation of literature, its more general adoption and application would vitalise other departments of school work just as the introduction of the technique of experiment and the

<sup>1</sup> On the analogy of technology and technocracy, Dewey's system might be termed technosophy, although it might be questioned whether it is a philosophy and not merely an extension of the scientific method.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. J. Dewey, *How We Think* (D. C. Heath & Co., Boston, 1910).

laboratory method into the teaching of science proved fruitful. The great social heritage, the cultural capital which mankind has accumulated by strenuous effort throughout the ages, and to which the modern child must be acculturated in the few years of school life, cannot all be acquired by personal investigation and experiment ; much must be accepted on authority if the race is not to revert to barbarism. Valuable as Dewey's extension of the methods of industrialism to education is as a protest against the traditional academic attitude to an education which has lost contact with the realities of life, and in reducing the lag between education and life, there is a tendency amongst his followers to ignore those aspects of education—esthetic, moral and religious, to which the methods of instrumentalism do not apply.

The instrumental or the experimental procedure which is the dominant feature of Dewey's philosophy has as its counterpart in practical education "the project method." Although the term is not original with Dewey, and although he has not dealt specifically with infant work, he, like Rousseau, has so influenced present-day educational thought and practice that some account of his philosophical position is necessary for the proper appreciation of such a modern development as the project method. The term "project," it is believed, was first applied in education to investigations proposed in agricultural colleges and conducted by the students on their parents' farms ; it has been popularised and exploited by Professor W. H. Kilpatrick<sup>1</sup> ; in this country its application is still restricted mainly to infant teaching.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *The Foundations of Method*.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. M. J. Wellock, *A Modern Infant School*.

A project was originally defined as a 'practical problem in its natural setting, and while the earliest projects could satisfy this definition, the demand for the natural setting cannot be fulfilled with most school projects, for example, the study of the Panama Canal, and the pupils' imagination has to be invoked to supply the missing features. An extreme instance is given in *The Dewey School*,<sup>1</sup> in which—“as each child wanted to own a number of sheep for his farm, we used grains of corn to represent sheep, and these were bought at \$5 each.” Kilpatrick stresses the purposeful aspect of the learning process, and distinguishes four phases in the project—to purpose, plan, execute, judge or criticise; and the permanent contribution of the project method to educational technique is likely to be the need for a real incentive to learning.

As projects are restricted to practical problems, the formal school subjects—reading, writing, counting, etc.—are acquired incidentally. Incidental learning has the great value of appropriateness; it accords with the psychological principle that the knowledge presented satisfies the pupil's immediate needs; it has consequently a significance and value to the pupil which knowledge presented in advance of the situation does not possess, and there is not the slightest doubt that the young child does learn more effectively, more rapidly and more pleasantly than by the traditional formal and mechanical methods. It is nevertheless questionable whether all the demands which society makes on the school can be thus met, for incidental teaching is, after all, accidental teaching, and facts which are essential

<sup>1</sup> P. 20. Cf. p. 23: “The children made a forest of twigs, and in imagination tapped the trees and filled the pail with sap.” Also p. 26. Pictures and photographs are likewise substituted for real objects.

for later life may be overlooked. It is not valid to retort that such facts can be acquired when the occasion calling for them arises, for then it may be too late. "Be prepared" and other slogans testify to the need for knowledge in advance of the situation, and it is to supply this knowledge that the school exists. Education must accordingly be a preparation for, as well as participation in, life. The knowledge acquired incidentally while adequate in amount might not be sufficiently organised to be retained economically and be readily available. The project, instead of being a means to the proper organisation of knowledge, may in unskilful hands become a substitute for organised knowledge ; Dewey himself has been led to protest<sup>1</sup> : " Many so-called projects are of such a short-time span and are entered upon for such casual reasons, that extension of acquaintance with facts and principles is at a minimum. In short, they are too trivial to be educative." Profitable application of the project method demands considerable pedagogical insight and great didactic skill, for the art of the teacher lies in grafting on to the pupils' centres of interest the organised subject-matter, a much more difficult proceeding than choosing one's own point of departure in teaching. The project is thus not a mere haphazard presentation ; " it is a difference of the type of organisation effected."<sup>2</sup>

Mere undirected activity likewise does not constitute a project, although it is very satisfying to the educational Marthas who are troubled about much serving. Dewey, in *How We Think*,<sup>3</sup> refers to an enthusiastic belief in the

<sup>1</sup> *The Way Out of Educational Confusion*, p. 31.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 32.

<sup>3</sup> Pp. 43-4.

almost magical educative efficiency of any kind of activity, granted it is an activity and not a passive absorption of academic and theoretic material, and continues :

The conception of play, of self-expression, of natural growth, are appealed to as if they meant that opportunity for any kind of spontaneous activity inevitably secures the due training of the mental power ; or a mythological brain physiology is appealed to as proof that any exercise of the muscles trains powers of thought.

The organisation of knowledge is secured ordinarily by the analysis of school pursuits into " subjects," although it may be at the cost of immediate interest, and in a subject like mathematics this organisation is more essential than in literature. These subjects must later be reunited, and this is effected through correlation. In the project method there is no need for correlation, because there has been no division into subjects ; the problem in the project plan is rather one of differentiation.<sup>1</sup> It is accordingly evident that a project in a single subject is a contradiction in terms.

It is assumed in the project method that adequate incentive to the learning of formal subjects is afforded a pupil by the presence of other pupils already in possession of such tools or engaged in acquiring them. Bertrand Russell has nevertheless challenged this assumption<sup>2</sup> :

There are some who argue that if a child is left alone he will teach himself to read and write and so forth from a wish not to be inferior to his neighbours, and that therefore absence of compulsion causes at most a delay of a year or two in the acquisition

<sup>1</sup> In *The Dewey School* (pp. 56, 60), differentiation of studies took place between 8 and 8½ years of age.

<sup>2</sup> *Education and the Social Order*, pp. 42-3.

of knowledge. I think that this position is unconsciously parasitic. In a world where every other child learns to read and write, it is probable that any given child will in time wish to escape the sense of inferiority which would be produced by ignorance. But in a world where all children escaped compulsion, there would soon be no occasion for this sense of inferiority, and each generation would be somewhat more ignorant than its predecessor. Very few children have a spontaneous impulse to learn the multiplication table. While their neighbours are compelled to learn it, they may, for very shame, feel that they ought to learn it too, but in a community where no child was obliged to learn it there would, before long, be only a few erudite pedants who would know what six times nine is.

The acquisition of concrete knowledge is pleasant to most children: if they live on a farm they will watch the farmer's operations and get to know all about them. But abstract knowledge is loved by very few, and yet it is abstract knowledge that makes a civilized community possible. Preservation of a civilized community demands, therefore, some method of causing children to behave in a manner which is not natural to them. It may be possible to substitute coaxing for compulsion, but it is not possible to leave the matter to the unaided operation of nature. The idea of education as merely affording opportunities for natural growth is not, I think, one which can be upheld by a person who realizes the complexity of modern societies. It is, of course, possible to say that this complexity is regrettable, and that it would be better to return to a simpler way of life, but unfortunately the process of so returning would involve the death by starvation of a very large percentage of the population. This alternative is so horrible that we are practically committed to the whole complex apparatus of the modern industrial world, and being so committed, we are also bound to fit our children to take their part in carrying it on. The negative theory of education, therefore, while it has many important elements of truth, and is largely valid so far as the emotions are concerned, cannot be accepted in its entirety as regards intellectual and technical training. Where these are concerned, something more positive is required.

Many projects which the pupils might be desirous of undertaking must inevitably be quite beyond their capacity, and if they are allowed to engage in these, the end can be only failure and discouragement, the demoralisation of defeat. The teacher might, however, render such assistance or the project might be so modified under the teacher's guidance as to induce pupils to conclude that no insuperable difficulties are encountered in actual life; to lead pupils of 7-7½ years of age to assume that they can discover all the secrets of metal-working<sup>1</sup> is to make a travesty of human discovery and invention. If projects are too ambitious, the satisfaction will be the teacher's, not the pupils'.

The moral training afforded to the pupil is a strong argument in favour of the project plan; habits of initiative, self-reliance and co-operation are developed in a way quite impossible in class-teaching systems. But the freedom which the project plan implies may degenerate into caprice, and while depriving the child of immediate happiness, it may likewise be detrimental to his later development. Here, too, Bertrand Russell offers a word of warning<sup>2</sup>:

Another respect in which, to my mind, many apostles of freedom go astray, is that they fail to recognise sufficiently the importance of routine in the life of the young. I do not mean that a routine should be rigid and absolute: there should be days when it is varied, such as Christmas Day and holidays. But even these variations should, on the whole, be expected by the child. A life of uncertainty is nervously exhausting at all times, but especially in youth. The child derives a sense of security from knowing more or less what is going to happen day by day.

<sup>1</sup> *The Dewey School*, pp. 33-4.

<sup>2</sup> *Education and the Social Order*, pp. 38-40.

## INFANT EDUCATION

He wishes his world to be safe, and subject to the reign of law. Our belief in the uniformity of nature is largely the projection upon the cosmos of the child's desire for routine in the nursery. Adventurousness and courage are highly desirable qualities, but they are most easily developed against a background of fundamental security.

A further point in favour of a large element of routine is that children find it both tiring and boring to have to choose their own occupation at all odd times. They prefer that at many times the initiative should not be theirs, and that their own choice should be confined within a framework imposed by friendly adults. Children, like grown-ups, enjoy the sense of achievement derived from mastering a difficulty, but this requires a consistency of effort of which few are capable without some outside encouragement. The capacity for consistent self-direction is one of the most valuable that a human being can possess. It is practically unknown in young children, and is never developed either by a very rigid discipline or by complete freedom. Very rigid discipline, such as that of soldiers in war-time, makes a man incapable of acting without the goad of external command. On the other hand, complete freedom throughout childhood does not teach him to resist the solicitations of a momentary impulse : he does not acquire the capacity of concentrating upon one matter when he is interested in another, or of resisting pleasures because they will cause fatigue that will interfere with subsequent work. The strengthening of the will demands, therefore, a somewhat subtle mixture of freedom and discipline, and is destroyed by an excess of either.

Difficult success as an ideal should be present to the mind of the young if they are not to be wayward and futile. But there are few to whom it will occur in an environment where freedom is absolute.

Anticipations of the project method are to be found in Plato's *Laws*, where he maintained that the children of the artisans should play with mimic tools at those occupations

in which they, when grown up, will be engaged. Aristotle<sup>1</sup> repeats Plato's statement :

The Directors of Education, as they are termed, should be careful what tales or stories the children hear, for the sports of children are designed to prepare the way for the business of later life, and should be for the most part imitations of the occupations which they will hereafter pursue in earnest.

Comenius likewise recommended, in the *School of Infancy*, the provision of such miniature tools. The situations into which Rousseau engineered Emile gave rise to problems of the nature of projects, and the occupations to which Gertrude's teaching was but an accompaniment, as described by Pestalozzi,<sup>2</sup> were simple forms of projects. Fröbel prescribed in *The Education of Man* exercises which are analogous to projects; thus in childhood the boy imitated phases of domestic life and in boyhood shared the work of the house.<sup>3</sup> Fröbel even mentions<sup>4</sup> building a hut, a common American project.

The value of the project as an educational method is that, as we have said above, it affords an incentive to the learning of organised subject-matter. It is a means in education, not an end; and teachers who fail to realise this will bring the method into discredit. The project is also a process for intermediate grades. The youngest pupils are interested in an activity for its own sake, not for the outcome, hence the satisfaction derived by a young pupil by the frequent repetition of a process. In the highest grades the pupil should have developed an interest in subjects for their own sakes, that is, he should have come to appreciate

<sup>1</sup> *Politics*, viii, 17.

<sup>2</sup> *Leonard and Gertrude*.

<sup>3</sup> Hailmann's trans., p. 101.

<sup>4</sup> P. 106.

ERGONIC DESIGN ATTITUDE

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J. F. OBERLIN.

## J. F. OBERLIN

1740-1826

CLAIMS have been advanced that various educators other than Oberlin founded the Infant School, for example, Pestalozzi and de Fellenberg, but these must be rejected. Although, as we have seen, Pestalozzi, by the introduction of his *Anschauungsunterricht*, made possible an education specially suited to infants, in practice he made no attempt to segregate the youngest pupils and educate them separately. Thomas Pole, in his *Observations Relative to Infant Schools*,<sup>1</sup> says<sup>2</sup>:

Some difficulty has arisen in endeavouring to ascertain with certainty, with whom the plan of beginning the education of children at the early age of two years, or two and a half, originated. Emmanuel de Fellenberg, it appears, had long entertained this idea, and Robert Owen, of New Lanark, in Scotland, had it in mind a considerable time before he reduced it to practice. Henry Brougham says, he hardly recollects the time at which he himself did not feel persuaded, that what is commonly called education, begins too late and is too much confined to mere learning; he is convinced that Robert Owen was the first person who made the experiment, and to this day Fellenberg's plan, though in principle the same, does not extend to Infants of so early an age.

Pole's statement, that de Fellenberg's plan "does not extend to infants of so early an age as Owen's," is substantiated

<sup>1</sup> Published 1823.

<sup>2</sup> Pp. 6-7.

by the *Reports of M. le Compte de Capo-d'Istria and of M. Rengger upon the Principles and Progress of the Establishment of M. de Fellenberg at Hofwyl, Switzerland.*<sup>1</sup> These Reports, made in November 1814 and in 1815 respectively, state that de Fellenberg's establishment for the poor received its first pupil on June 5, 1810. De Fellenberg himself called it "a school of industry," and intellectual instruction was only accessory; his work really forms an interesting chapter in the history of industrial education, an education through the practice of agriculture. The age of the first pupil entered is given as eight; little Klaus is said to be "seven years old," and another pupil is incidentally referred to in the second Report as "one of the youngest, only eight years old." The number of children under instruction at the time when the Reports were made appears to have been twenty-three, and the influence of Pestalozzi is acknowledged.

While Pole was right in regard to de Fellenberg, unknown to him Robert Owen had been anticipated by another continental educator, Jean Frederic Oberlin, as early as 1767.

Oberlin was born on August 31, 1740, at Strasbourg, where his father was a Master, nominally a Professor, in the Gymnasium or Classical School. He was trained at the University of Strasbourg, and after qualifying for the Church, accepted a post as tutor to the family of M. Ziegenhagen, a surgeon at Strasbourg. On March 30, 1767, he undertook the charge of Pastor of Waldbach, one of two parishes constituting the Ban de la Roche or Steinthal on the borders of Alsace-Lorraine in the Vosges. His parish,

<sup>1</sup> Trans. by John Attersoll, London, 1820.

Waldbach, comprised five hamlets with three churches, and he resided in the village of Waldbach itself. The district, as the name Steinthal (Valley of Stone) itself suggests, was about as unpromising a place as one could imagine, and it well answered to its name when Stuber, Oberlin's immediate predecessor in the pastorate, who later persuaded Oberlin to succeed him, took up his duties there in 1750. In spite of Stuber's strenuous efforts to elevate and ameliorate the condition of the inhabitants, things were very little improved when Oberlin arrived. On entering his charge in 1767 Oberlin found that the only regular school-house in the five villages was the hut which had been erected under Stuber's direction and superintendence; having been constructed of unseasoned wood, it was in a most miserable and ruinous condition.<sup>1</sup> Oberlin set himself to have a suitable school erected in its place, and not only was the projected building completed, but in the course of a few years a school-house was erected in each of the other four villages. During the construction of the necessary buildings the preparation of masters was undertaken.

It was at this period that the idea of Infant Schools occurred to him. Sims says<sup>2</sup>:

Whilst the care of youth thus engaged, even that of infants did not escape the vigilant and benevolent mind of Oberlin: and it appears that the peculiar attention to children from two to six or seven years of age, in rooms called "Salles d'Asile" at Paris, and in "Infant Schools" in England, must be traced up to Oberlin's parish as their source and first model. He was fearful

<sup>1</sup> *Memoirs of J. F. Oberlin*, pp. 82 et seq.

<sup>2</sup> *Brief Memorials of J. F. Oberlin*, pp. 41-2.

lest the little children should be exposed to danger, or should contract early habits of idleness and vice, when their parents were engaged in husbandry, or at a trade ; he was therefore induced to hire rooms, in which the children might amuse themselves, and be instructed, under the control of mild and affectionate women, as *Conductrices*, and whose task consisted in requiring them to speak French, instead of the vulgar Patois ; in teaching the elder ones to sew, spin, knit, and sing ; in explaining geographical cards, and prints of natural and of sacred history ; and preventing harm or mischief during the play-hours.

The author of *Memoirs of John Frederic Oberlin*, whom we infer to be Mrs. Cunningham, the wife of the Rev. Francis Cunningham, who doubtless on behalf of the British and Foreign Bible Society with his wife visited Ban de la Roche in 1820,<sup>1</sup> has supplied a more detailed account<sup>2</sup> :

As Oberlin had observed with concern the disadvantages to which the younger children were subjected, whilst their elder brothers and sisters were at school, and their parents busily engaged in their daily avocations he laid down a plan for the introduction of *infant schools* also ; probably the very first ever established, and the model of those subsequently opened at Paris, and still more recently in this country. Observation and experience had convinced him that, even from the very cradle, children are capable of being taught to distinguish between right and wrong, and of being trained to habits of subordination and industry ; and, in conjunction with his wife, he therefore formed *conductrices* for each commune, engaged large rooms for them, and salaried them at his own expense. Instruction, in these schools, was mingled with amusement ; and whilst enough of discipline was introduced to instil habits of subjection, a degree of liberty was allowed, which left the infant mind full power of expansion, and information was conveyed which might turn to

<sup>1</sup> See *Memoirs*, pp. 270-83 ; also Mrs. Josephine E. Butler's *Life of J. F. Oberlin*, p. 163, footnote.

<sup>2</sup> Pp. 84-7.

the most important use in after life. During school-hours, the children were collected on forms in great circles. Two women were employed, the one to direct the handicraft, the other to instruct and entertain them. Whilst the children of two or three years only were made at intervals to sit quietly by, those of five or six were taught to knit, spin, and sew ; and when they were beginning to be weary of this occupation, their conductrice showed them coloured pictures relating to Scripture subjects or natural history, making them recite after her the explanations she gave. She also explained geographical maps of France, Europe, or the Ban de la Roche, and its immediate environs, engraved in wood for the purpose, by Oberlin's direction, and mentioned the names of the different places marked upon them ; in addition to this, she taught them to sing moral songs and hymns. Thus she varied their employments as much as possible, taking care to keep them continually occupied, and never permitting them to speak a word of *patois*.

With minds thus stored, and trained by discipline, the children, when arrived at a proper age, entered what may be called the public schools, and the masters were relieved and encouraged in their duties (which, in such a situation, were sufficiently arduous) by the progress they had already made.

The Infant Schools were only a secondary consideration in Oberlin's schemes for the economic, educational and religious regeneration of the inhabitants of the Steinthal, but it is significant that after his death when his parishioners desired to perpetuate his memory, it was by the endowment of Infant Schools that they did so. Sims, in his *Brief Memorials*, explains<sup>1</sup> :

The friends of M. Oberlin have, since his decease, erected a Monument to his Memory, in the Church of Waldbach. It is a tablet of black marble, on which a piece of white marble—a

<sup>1</sup> Appendix V, pp. 178-80.

sculptured portrait of the deceased—has been incrusted. The inscription, in French, is as follows :

TO JOHN FREDERIC OBERLIN,

Pastor and Parent of this Parish,  
during 59 years.

Born in 1740 ; died in 1826.

The memory of the just shall be blessed.

Prov. x. 7.

Not satisfied, however, to have raised a marble tablet, his friends have been farther anxious to erect a living monument—a monument of charity—bearing the name of Oberlin, and transmitting to posterity a perpetual record of his wise philanthropy, and his anxiety to promote the social and domestic virtues. Accordingly, they have determined that it shall be a Foundation for granting (if an adequate sum should be raised,) a salary of 100 francs (£4 sterling) a-year to each of the *Conductrices* who undertake to teach in the Infant-schools, in the several villages once under Oberlin's pastoral care.

By this means, those benevolent but poor women, who, being obliged to earn a livelihood, could only attend about once a week, will be able to give up their time regularly to the instruction of the little children.

Sims adds that the idea of Infant Schools is thought by some to have originated with Stuber, Oberlin's predecessor, but in corroboration of Oberlin's claim Sims advises the fact that the French Academy awarded a prize to Louisa Schepler,<sup>1</sup> Oberlin's housekeeper, as the foundress of Infant Schools.

<sup>1</sup> The rule of Louisa Schepler in her schools is quoted in Mrs. Josephine E. Butler's *Life of J. F. Oberlin*, p. 65, thus :

" She endeavours to make the children feel the presence of God at all seasons and in all places, she exhorts them to have recourse to Him at all times, as the God of love. She inculcates in them a horror of deceit and falsehood, of disobedience, and of a want of respect for the poor. . . . Lastly she endeavours to teach them what is meant by the *prayer of the heart*, by kneeling with them, and praying with them in a simple manner which they can understand."



PRINCESS PAULINE OF LIPPE.  
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## PRINCESS PAULINE OF LIPPE

1769-1820

UNTIL recently some obscurity has surrounded the question of the origin of Infant Schools in Germany. A footnote to the "Memoir" prefixed to Pestalozzi's *Letters on Early Education addressed to J. P. Greaves*<sup>1</sup> reads :

The friends of infant schools will be pleased to hear that, while the above was going through the press, a prospectus and circular have been received from Paris, in which a committee of ladies publish the first annual report of a flourishing Infant School, of upwards of 80 children, 113, Rue du Bac, and invite the public to the foundation of similar institutions. A curious fact has also been elicited by the late public discussions of the subject in Germany, namely, that an Infant School has existed at Lippe Detmold, in Saxony, ever since the year 1802.

Commenting on the "curious fact" referred to in this statement, Salmon, in his *Infant Schools: Their History and Theory*, adds<sup>2</sup> : "But I have searched in vain for any further information respecting it." Dissatisfied with this conclusion the present writer communicated with the late Professor Rein, of Jena, who in reply stated that in 1802 a Princess Pauline of Lippe had instituted at Detmold an Infant School (eine Kinderbewahranstalt—lit. a Children's Care Centre), which still exists under the title of "Paulinenanstalt." He also referred the writer to Archivrat

<sup>1</sup> Pp. xxxvi-xxxvii.      <sup>2</sup> P. 8, footnote. Lippe-Detmold is not in Saxony.

Kiewning, at Detmold, who in turn wrote as follows : Princess Pauline of Lippe, who held the regency during the minority of her son from 1802 to 1820, in founding a penal workhouse about 1800, also conceived the plan of establishing a Care Centre (Aufbewahranstalt) for little children. She had about that time read in a Journal that the wife of Consul Bonaparte supported a similar institution in Paris. Princess Pauline had taken over this plan as a whole, and on 1st July, 1802, opened her Infant School at Detmold. How the idea occurred to her, she left behind in an account which she allowed to appear in a journal of the Superintendent<sup>1</sup> in 1803, a complete translation of which it is considered advisable to give here :

Whenever I have had occasion to speak in public, either to make an appeal or urge a claim, I have always found myself addressing an audience of men, and to me as a woman this has never been altogether satisfactory. This opportunity of approaching my fellow women in a spirit of friendliness and confidence is therefore very welcome to me. Women have for so long been preached at by moralists, derided by satirists, chided by fathers and decried by husbands as the slaves of fashion, particularly as imitators of French novelties, that by many the truth of the charge passes unquestioned. Being myself far too much of a woman to imagine that this is the way to achieve anything or to

<sup>1</sup> *Beyträge zur Beförderung der Volksbildung* von Friedrich August von Colln, Generalsuperintendent und Prediger zu Detmold. Vierter Stuck, Frankfurt-a-M., 1803. Seite 23, fg. II, "Vorschlag, eine Pariser Mode nach Detmold zu verpflanzen. Von der Fürstin und Regentin zur Lippe."

This journal is out of print, and the writer is indebted to Archivrat Kiewning for a copy of the article.

K. Meyer : *Die Fürstin Pauline zur Lippe und ihre Liebeshatigheit. Ein Erinnerungsblatt zum 100 jährigen Jubiläum der Pflegeanstalt in Detmold* (Separatabdruck aus Schafers "Monatschrift für Innere Mission"), Detmold, 1901, also contains Princess Pauline's account, but it, too, is reported out of print.

Cf. H. Kiewning : *Fürstin Pauline zur Lippe 1769-1820*, pp. 143-5.

gain the support of my sex, I appear before you with proposals of a quite contrary nature. I am exceedingly desirous that we here in Detmold, in the heart of the same Westphalia which was so much slandered by the wicked and malicious Voltaire, should be the first to emulate in every detail a new Paris fashion. It is not a question this time of colours and ribbons, of tinselled finery and gaudy trifles, but of a beautiful and tender human quality, a new discovery in the beneficent care of others. But let me tell you what it is, and I am sure you will be interested.

Madame Bonaparte and a number of aristocratic and refined gentlewomen in the huge capital of the French Empire set themselves with truly sisterly affection and enviable solicitude to secure in the poorer quarters of the city apartments where the little ones of tender age whose mothers by reason of their poverty were engaged in outdoor occupations, might during the day be fed, tended and provided for: every morning the mothers, their minds at ease and their hearts cheered, leave their children at one of the centres and gratefully fetch them away again in the evening. The founders of this good work undertake the supervision in turn. I think that is more or less how it is conducted, but I speak from memory. I read an account of the scheme some months ago in one of our most widely circulated journals. What truly womanly heart would not be gladdened by this simple, kindly and gracious idea! It appeals to us so much that we are at a loss to understand why it was so long before it was first put into practice; we torture our minds and hearts for the reason that it did not occur to us, that the idea had to be aroused by an example, and that it had not originated spontaneously. That at least is an avowal of my feelings when I read the account which impressed me very much, and yet at the time I took no steps to carry out the idea. It happened at a sad time of sore trial for me,<sup>1</sup> when more pressing duties claimed all my attention and did not allow me to devote any of my time to those worthy avocations which are so dear to me, and so this scheme was also laid aside. But it did not escape me, and now that peace is gradually returning to my heart, the fair picture of that example of charity paints itself in my fancy in doubly pleasing

<sup>1</sup> The reference is to the death of her husband, the Prince, on April 4, 1802.

colours. I have been trying, therefore, to enlist the interest of a number of people who have sympathy with the needy, and to get them to participate in the realisation of my aspirations.

I should indeed like to embody in the general plan this branch of welfare work, which falls so naturally into line with the whole scheme, and to this end first of all to win the confidence and sympathy of the mothers. How many harassed women would be relieved of their greatest burden by being enabled to assist in the upbringing of their children by their own diligent toil, provided that the care of their children up to their fourth and fifth years did not prevent it : how many mothers have to leave their children daily, only to be torn between the worry of making ends meet and the fear of what may happen to the little ones in their absence ! How many women who have as yet been fairly comfortable begin to grow poor as soon as their marriage is blessed by a large family, and are driven to look upon the fairest gift of God, a healthy and numerous offspring, as a burden and a misfortune ; how many finally deny their maternal instinct, and neglect and even leave to destitution that which the Father of Love entrusted to them, and bound to them with such wonderfully strong ties ! No less is the embarrassment of men who lose their wives while their children are still young, and whose means do not allow them to engage someone to look after their children. Such a dilemma is often the cause of those second and third marriages, entered into without due consideration, which often offend good taste and morals, and sometimes take place almost before the first partner is cold in her grave. Would all these dangers which assail the virtuous fulfilment of domestic duties be then averted through the introduction of this Paris fashion, this benevolent institution, in a form suited to local conditions ? Assuredly they would be, and I have pleasure in announcing that an experiment will be made in the summer months, during the busy harvest-time, and in a place which is very dear to me, where the name Nursery Institution (*Pfleganstalt*) indicates what is proposed. Every mother will give notice the day before, and the following morning, before her outdoor work begins, she will with peace of mind and confidence bring her children, and fetch them home again in the evening. The little ones will pass the

time playing, always under supervision, but without restraint, in the garden if the weather permits, or else in the hall of the hospital which has not yet been brought into use. They will be washed and tidied on arrival, and, if necessary, clothed for the day in tunics and clean underclothing made in the orphanage and in the industrial school; and they will be fed and generally looked after. Their diet will consist chiefly of milk foods, and we shall endeavour to give them occupation suitable to their ages. In this way we should learn their exact ages, and too late entrance to school would be obviated, a thing which hitherto has unfortunately too often happened. We should appoint as assistants the older girls from the orphanage and the industrial school during the period when they were approaching the time of confirmation and of leaving school, and thus afford them practical training as children's nurses. The very competent matron of the orphanage would also undertake the supervision, and everything else would follow of itself, so easily and naturally, once the institute (*Anstalt*) is set going. I should think that for every citizen of Detmold, and especially for every woman citizen, it would be a very pleasant thought to know that many a worthy woman had been relieved of a very responsible burden, and that there was a place, which anyone might visit who cared, where the little helpless mites left behind could meet together and find a refuge, and I am sure that the sight of that joyous throng, that hive of carefree busy bees would afford great pleasure and satisfaction. The reward which I claim is to be allowed to make the necessary arrangements and to defray any expenses incurred; but I should be very pleased indeed if several ladies, whether married or single, were interested enough to undertake the supervision one day in the week: that is, if they would attend for a quarter of an hour, forenoon and afternoon, but not always at the same hour, and see for themselves how the children are cared for, remove any difficulties that may be encountered, and make suggestions for improvement. How glad I should be to find ladies willing to undertake this, whose age, home circumstances, social duties, health and inclination would permit them to accept this proposal. It seems to me that it would be such a noble, valuable and genuinely religious work for my sex, and I

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can think of no better way of enlisting the support of the public for this new enterprise, and of winning the confidence of the mothers, and giving the whole scheme a gentle and kindly character, than by handing over the whole management to women, and entrusting the children who are parted for the time being from their own mothers to the loving care of other motherly hearts.

The editor appended a note to this article stating that this beneficent work had actually begun the previous summer, and till the end of the autumn succeeded in relieving the anxieties of poor mothers ; that it was under the charge of twelve gentlewomen of the town who took turns in supervising it ; that it would be continued each summer, and that he hoped it might help towards making the lower classes of inhabitants of the town more gentle and more humane.

Princess Pauline, it is evident from the above abstract, anticipated Robert Owen in instituting the Nursery School, and from more disinterested motives, as the latter required the labour of the mothers in his own factories. That the Paulinenanstalt was founded on sound lines may be inferred from the fact that it has continued in existence down to the present day.



ROBERT OWEN.

From a painting by W. H. Brooke in the Scottish National Portrait Gallery.

## ROBERT OWEN

1771-1858

ATTEMPTS have been made to associate Owen with Oberlin, but these are futile, although the confusion is somewhat excusable. A Mr. Owen did visit Oberlin, but it was the Rev. John Owen, M.A., Secretary to the British and Foreign Bible Society, who, writing from Basle on September 16, 1818, says :

The place from which my last was dated, Waldback, has completely filled my mind, and laid such hold on my warmest affections that I can scarcely bring myself to think, or speak, or write, on any thing but Pastor Oberlin, and his Ban de la Roche.<sup>1</sup>

Robert Owen was on the Continent in 1818 with his friend Professor Pictet, and from the account given in *The Life of Robert Owen : Written by Himself*<sup>2</sup> it would appear that in Switzerland he visited a Father Oberlin at Fribourg, Pestalozzi at Yverdun, and de Fellenberg at Hofwyl. That it was not J. F. Oberlin, the founder of Infant Schools, is obvious for these reasons : Owen's Oberlin was engaged in educational activities at Fribourg, in Switzerland, not at the Ban de la Roche in Alsace ; he was a Catholic priest, whereas J. F. Oberlin was a Protestant

<sup>1</sup> The whole letter is reprinted in Mrs. Cunningham's *Memoirs of J. F. Oberlin*, pp. 211-17. Cf. also Sims's *Brief Memorials*, pp. 68-9.

<sup>2</sup> Reprint by G. Bell & Sons, 1920, pp. 240-7.

pastor; he had never heard of Infant Schools, on the subject of which Owen enters into a long disquisition, whereas J. F. Oberlin had founded such schools fifty years before. There may have been two Oberlins, but it is most unlikely. Owen's memory is evidently at fault, as it is on many points throughout his autobiography, and it may charitably be inferred that he unwittingly substituted Oberlin's name for that of Father Girard.<sup>1</sup> Owen's statement runs :

On my return to Professor Pictet's at Geneva, we made a visit to the three then most noted schools for the poor in Switzerland. The first was Father Oberlin's, a Catholic school conducted in a truly Catholic spirit by the good father of the Church, and with as little sectarian spirit in his proceedings as was practicable while he remained a member of his sect. This was a large school, well filled with the poorer class of children, well conducted on charitable principles, according to the old mode of teaching ; but it was quite evident that the heart of this good man was in it, and he had laboured hard and long to bring it to the state in which it was when I visited him at Fribburgh, where the school was situated. This excellent man when informed by Professor Pictet of my school and establishment which he had seen and so frequently examined, became greatly interested to know how I obtained such extraordinary results, and became anxious to learn how to obtain them as I had done. His school consisted of boys of the usual age at which boys were sent at this time to school. . . .

Although, unknown to him, his institution of Infant Schools had been anticipated by J. F. Oberlin at Ban de la Roche, and by Princess Pauline at Detmold, Owen's venture can quite legitimately be regarded as independent of the continental movement.

When Owen "entered upon the government of New

<sup>1</sup> For an account of Father Girard's school, see letter of Gregory Girard, Prefect of the French School in Fribourg, in Bell's *Wrongs of Children*, pp. 74-8.

Lanark about the first of January 1800”<sup>1</sup> the much-vaunted Parish School system held sway in Scotland. Tradition has decreed that John Knox’s *Book of Discipline*<sup>2</sup> should be regarded as the educational charter of Scotland and the Parish School era as the golden age; these are articles of almost every Scotsman’s creed, but an unprejudiced survey of the evidence suggests that they are mere superstitions. The Parish School is a pre-Reformation institution; it was a phase of the Catholic Church’s endeavour to plant a church in every parish, and even for long after the Reformation Parish Schools occupied part of the church buildings. The scheme in the *Book of Discipline* had no influence on Scottish educational practice, most of the Parish Schools being in a more deplorable condition after the Reformation than before it.<sup>3</sup> And if the Parish School system failed to meet the requirements of country districts—one Highland parish was 90 miles long and one school only to a parish had to be provided—it was lamentably insufficient to meet the demand in towns resulting from the industrial revolution, there being only one Parish School for the original Barony Parish of Glasgow, comprehending 90,000 inhabitants in 1837, and not even one for the remainder of the city of Glasgow, comprehending 160,000 souls.

It is rather on its quality than on its quantity that the fame of the Parish School system is supposed to rest, but there is as little foundation for this. *An Essay on Practical Education Read by a Member of the Society Before the Second Annual Meeting of the Friendly Society of Burgh and Parochial*

<sup>1</sup> Life: Written by Himself, p. 78.

<sup>2</sup> 1560.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. J. C. Jessop, *Education in Angus*, ch. iv, University of London Press, 1931.

*Schoolmasters of the County of Roxburgh Held at Hawick upon 30th May 1812* contains the following statement :

A retrospect of little more than sixty years presents a melancholy view, with a few exceptions, of our profession.—A corporal who had fought in the German wars, who had nearly forgot or never understood his own language, and who had just acquired such a smattering of French, as enabled him to buy an ounce of rapee snuff—an old soldier who had lost a leg or an arm at the battle of Fontenoy—a broken excise-officer—a discarded, dissipated clerk in some whisky-distillery, seemed the striking characteristics of our degraded and neglected profession.

From this cause, it cannot be matter of wonder that the whole body of schoolmasters became objects of disrespect, and the appellation of *Domine* equivalent to insignificance. They neither knew nor practised their duty.—They accepted it as a mere *pass the time*, and while they thus abused the profession, they degraded themselves below the scale of rational and thinking beings.

Nor were the conditions of the schoolroom any more satisfactory, for the same work continues :

The most prominent features are incongruity and confusion, naturally arising from the neglect of professional duty, and a want of professional zeal. . . .

Pythagoras imposed a silence of at least two years upon his scholars after their admission ; but upon inspecting many schools in these our times, the reverse seems the leading order of the day. Noise, tumult, and riot, laughing, whistling ; the sound of mirth, or almost expiration stun the ear. One exclaiming, *master* ; another spelling a word ; a third crying, *please give me leave* ; and a fourth bawling, *this account comes out*, &c, are the discordant characteristics of these tumultuous and noisy-mansions.

There were also too many “Pleas for . . .” and “Defences of the Parish School” published about this time for all to have been well with the system.

The Parish School system naturally invited comparison and criticism. The influence of Pestalozzi was beginning to permeate Britain and Ireland, but the real challenge to the Scottish Parish School came from the monitorial systems of Bell and Lancaster. Thus the speaker at the Hawick meeting of teachers in 1812, while protesting that "in many of our schools considerable progress has been made in order and method, in professional abilities and zeal, before the fame of Lancaster and Bell had reached our ears" generously acknowledges, however :

The order and method in the Lancastrian school will strike everyone with astonishment and admiration ; and the transferring of these, in as far as can be done, to our parochial schools, will render them the most perfect models of teaching that ever existed. The manner of the Lancastrian, combined with the matter of our parochial schools, should be daily aimed at, and attempted by us all.

The same high hopes of the monitorial method were held by Owen, and he supported financially both Lancaster and Bell<sup>1</sup> :

My mind had been early deeply impressed while in Manchester with the importance of education for the human race. I had watched and aided the progress of Lancaster in his early attempts to commence something towards a beginning to instruct the poor, and had encouraged him to the extent that my means permitted. And when the Church set up Dr. Bell in opposition to Lancaster, I was inclined equally to encourage Dr. Bell.

Owen's next move, as he narrates,<sup>2</sup> was to induce Lancaster to visit Scotland "where the new manufacturing system was involving the children of the working classes

<sup>1</sup> *Life : Written by Himself*, pp. 116-17.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* , pp. 147-8.

in new conditions, unfavourable to knowledge, to health, and to happiness." Lancaster accepted Owen's invitation, lecturing in Glasgow on April 14, 1812, and attending a public dinner given in his honour on the following evening. At Lancaster's own entreaty, Owen presided, and in announcing the object of the meeting, no toast being proposed, as Lancaster was a Quaker, he first made public his sentiments on the true formation of character. The speech which Owen intended to include in the Appendix to his autobiography is reported in *The Glasgow Herald*, April 20, 1812, as follows :

The principal object of this meeting is to promote the cause of giving a good and proper education to those who otherwise would receive a bad and improper one. By education I now mean the instruction of all kinds, which we receive from our earliest infancy, until our characters are generally fixed and established.

It is, however, necessary, that the *value* of this object should be considered, as well as the means of putting it into execution.

Much less has been said and written in relation to education, but few perhaps are yet aware of its real importance in society ; and certainly it has not acquired that prominent rank in our estimation which it deserves ; for, when duly investigated, it will be found to be, *so far at least as depends on our operations*, the primary source of all the good and evil, misery and happiness, which exist in the world. . . .

We can materially command then those circumstances which influence character ; and if we proceed on this principle, keeping it steadily in view, much more may be yet accomplished for the improvement of society, than has been hitherto even attempted.

We now come to the immediate application of the principle. There are in this city and suburbs, many thousand children who, from their situation, must generally be trained to vicious habits and to poverty, unless you, gentlemen, and our fellow citizens, step forth to prevent the evil. I do not hesitate to say, the

remedy is in your power; you possess the means, and I trust you will not withhold them.

The object is no less than to remove gross ignorance and extreme poverty, with their attendant misery, from your population, and to make it rational, well disposed, and well behaved.

You may ask, how have we the means now in our power? I reply, dear friend here, Joseph Lancaster, has prepared them ready to our hands; his important improvements, and discoveries in education, when properly applied, will enable us easily, cheaply, and effectually, to accomplish it. . . .

The acclamation with which the speech was greeted was rather a tribute to Lancaster than the result of the impression it made on the audience, as Owen mistakenly assumed and recorded in his autobiography.

The same exalted opinion of the monitorial systems of Bell and Lancaster found expression in the first essay, written in 1812, of *A New View of Society*; in it<sup>1</sup> he says:

They have already effected enough to prove that all which is now in contemplation respecting the training of youth may be accomplished without fear of disappointment. And by so doing, as the consequences of their improvements cannot be confined within the British Isles, they will for ever be ranked among the most important benefactors of the human race.

The system nevertheless soon belied the great expectations which Owen had entertained regarding it, for in the fourth essay, written a year later, he says<sup>2</sup>: "It must be evident to common observers, that children may be taught, by either Dr. Bell's or Mr. Lancaster's system, to read, write, account, and sew, and yet acquire the worst habits, and have their minds rendered irrational for life." And in

<sup>1</sup> Robert Owen, *A New View of Society and Other Writings*, Everyman edition, p. 18.

<sup>2</sup> Everyman edition, p. 74.

his evidence before Brougham's Select Committee<sup>1</sup> he stated :

I consider the facility with which children acquire the rudiments of learning, an unfortunate result of the new system ; for as they are now practised, the children too rapidly become possessed of learning, and they have not time to acquire those habits and dispositions which have always appeared to me to be of more importance than the acquirement of those rudiments of learning.

Thus if the Parish School system of Scotland was individualism run riot, the monitorial system which sought to displace it was mass education of the most mechanical kind.

In his address at the dinner to Lancaster in Glasgow Owen had declared that we can materially command those circumstances which influence character, thus adumbrating his social theory, and he headed the first of the essays on the formation of character which constituted his *New View of Society* with the statement :

Any general character, from the best to the worst, from the most ignorant to the most enlightened, may be given to any community, even to the world at large, by the application of proper means ; which means are to a great extent at the command and under the control of those who have influence in the affairs of men.

Owen, like Rousseau in the *Emile*, believed that man was born good, that there is no original sin in the human heart, the how and the why of the entrance of every vice

<sup>1</sup> Minutes of Evidence taken before the Select Committee appointed to inquire into the Education of the Lower Orders of the Metropolis. Third Report. Ordered by The House of Commons to be Printed 19 June 1816, p. 239.

can be traced.<sup>1</sup> The evils from which humanity suffers can thus be attributed to social conditions and social influences. While Rousseau did admit that in an ideal world social and individual claims need not conflict, Owen had a greater belief in the power of society to reform itself. Thus he says<sup>2</sup>

By my own experience and reflection I had ascertained that human nature is radically good, and is capable of being trained, educated, and placed from birth in such manner, that all ultimately (that is, as soon as the gross errors and corruptions of the present false and wicked system are overcome and destroyed) must become united, good, wise, wealthy, and happy.

His principle of "social heredity" amounted almost to a "social predestination." Rousseau, in *The Social Contract*, had announced : "Man is born free ; and everywhere he is in chains" : Owen would agree that everywhere he is in chains, but would deny that man was born free. It was his extreme determinism that doubtless evoked the opposition of those who on theological grounds maintained the freedom of the will. Determinism is usually inherently inconsistent. Given a fulcrum, Archimedes could have moved the world. Given a thinker, the determinist may be able to demonstrate that experience is a concatenation of causally connected events, but he fails to realise that the category of cause has its origin in the thinking mind. Given a philosopher-ruler of Plato's type Owen might have regenerated society, but such a philosopher-ruler could not himself be completely the product of the society he undertakes to reform.

<sup>1</sup> *Emile*, Everyman trans., p. 56.

<sup>2</sup> *Life: Written by Himself*, p. 181.

So long as Owen restricts his determinism to "the community" and does not assume that the individual's character can be fashioned quite irrespective of his hereditary endowment, he can claim a certain measure of support. Thus Benjamin Kidd in his work, *The Science of Power*,<sup>1</sup> contends that under the influence of the notion of the ideal the outlook of a people can be changed in a generation, instancing in support of his contention the development of the Japanese people, who within the space of less than two generations passed through the whole interval which separates feudalism from modern conditions. And Kidd concludes triumphantly :

The will to attain to an end imposed on a people by the emotion of an ideal organised and transmitted through social heredity is the highest capacity of mind. It can only be imposed in all its strength through the young. So to impose it has become the chief end of education in the future.

Oh, you blind leaders who seek to convert the world by laboured disputation ! Step out of the way or the world must fling you aside. Give us the Young. Give us the Young and we will create a new mind and a new earth in a single generation.

As a corollary to Owen's social theory we have the doctrine of the unlimited power of education. Locke had affirmed<sup>2</sup> that of all the men we meet with, nine parts of ten are what they are, good or evil, useful or not, by their education. Owen would not descend to vulgar fractions, and would generalise Locke's dictum ; thus he contends<sup>3</sup> : " That the old collectively may train the young collectively

<sup>1</sup> Quoted from the author's *The Philosophical Book of Education*, pp. 53-4.

<sup>2</sup> *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*, § 1.

<sup>3</sup> *A New View of Society*, Everyman edition, p. 64.

to be ignorant and miserable, or to be intelligent and happy," and he does not consider it necessary to prove that children can be trained to acquire *any language, sentiments, belief, or any bodily habits and manners, not contrary to human nature.*<sup>1</sup> He even goes so far as to maintain<sup>2</sup> that by judicious training the infants of any one class in the world may be readily formed into men of any other class, even to believe and declare that conduct to be right and virtuous, and to die in its defence, which their parents had been taught to believe and say was wrong and vicious, and to oppose which, those parents would also have willingly sacrificed their lives.

Owen did not scruple to hazard his fortune to put his social theories to the test. He had improved out of all recognition the amenities of New Lanark, where the mills were situated which the company to which he acted as manager had acquired in 1800 from Mr. Dale, who was later to become Owen's father-in-law. Not content with this, he planned an establishment which he designated the New Institution, and which he described in the first of the essays on the formation of character written in 1812; it was to be provided with a playground into which "the children are to be received as soon as they can freely walk alone; to be superintended by persons instructed to take charge of them."<sup>3</sup> The opposition of his partners obstructed the realisation of his scheme, and not till 1816, after a change of partners and proprietorship, was he in a position to carry his ideas into actual practice.<sup>4</sup> In *An Address to the Inhabitants of New Lanark*, delivered at the

<sup>1</sup> *A New View of Society*, Everyman edition, p. 16.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 272.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 40.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *Life: Written by Himself*, p. 117.

Opening of the Institution for the Formation of Character on January 1, 1816, he intimated<sup>1</sup>:

The institution has been devised to afford the means of receiving your children at an early age, as soon almost as they can walk. By this means many of you, mothers of families, will be enabled to earn a better maintenance or support for your children; you will have less care and anxiety about them; while the children will be prevented from acquiring any bad habits, and gradually prepared to learn the best.

The middle room of the story below will be appropriated to their accommodation; and in this their chief occupation will be to play and amuse themselves in severe weather: at other times they will be permitted to occupy the enclosed area before the building; for to give children a vigorous constitution, they ought to be kept as much as possible in the open air. As they advance in years, they will be taken into the rooms on the right and left, where they will be regularly instructed in the rudiments of common learning; which before they shall be six years old, they may be taught in a superior manner.

Various accounts of the opening of the Infant School proposed above have been given in *Robert Owen: Written by Himself*,<sup>2</sup> but these were written forty years later, and a man is not always wise so long after the event; it is advisable consequently to rely on contemporary evidence where such is available. We are fortunately not without some such evidence. Owen was examined as a witness by Lord Brougham's Commission on the Education of the Lower Orders on June 11, 1816, and in reply to the question, "What is the plan adopted by you?" outlined his scheme thus<sup>3</sup>:

<sup>1</sup> *A New View of Society*, Everyman edition, p. 28

<sup>2</sup> Cf. pp. 191-7, 210-12.

<sup>3</sup> *Minutes of Evidence Taken before the Select Committee appointed to inquire into the Education of the Lower Orders of the Metropolis. Third Report. Ordered by The House of Commons to be Printed*, 19 June 1816, pp. 240 et seq.

The children are received into a preparatory or training school at the age of three, in which they are perpetually superintended, to prevent them acquiring bad habits, to give them good ones, and to form their dispositions to mutual kindness and a sincere desire to contribute all in their power to benefit each other ; these effects are chiefly accomplished by example and practice, precept being found of little use, and not comprehended by them at this early age ; the children are taught also whatever may be supposed useful, that they can understand, and this instruction is combined with as much amusement as is found to be requisite for their health, and to render them active, cheerful and happy, fond of the school and of their instructors. The school, in bad weather, is held in apartments properly arranged for the purpose ; but in fine weather the children are much out of doors, that they may have the benefit of sufficient exercise in the open air. In this training-school the children remain two or three years, according to their bodily strength and mental capacity ; when they have attained as much strength and instruction as to enable them to unite, without creating confusion, with the youngest classes in the superior school, they are admitted into it ; and in this school they are taught to read, write, account, and the girls, in addition, to sew ; but the leading object in this more advanced stage of their instruction, is to form their habits and dispositions. The children generally attend this superior school until they are ten years old ; and they are instructed in healthy and useful amusements for an hour or two every day, during the whole of this latter period. Among these exercises and amusements, they are taught to dance ; those who have good voices, to sing ; and those among the boys who have a natural taste for music, are instructed to play some instrument. At this age both boys and girls are generally withdrawn from the day school, and are put into the mills or to some regular employment. . . .

Asked to give the Committee the ages of the children in his establishment Owen read and handed in the following table :

## INFANT EDUCATION

| Females. | Males. |                |   |  |
|----------|--------|----------------|---|--|
| 35       | 25     | of 3 years old |   |  |
| 27       | 19     | " 4            | " |  |
| 29       | 30     | " 5            | " |  |
| 27       | 21     | " 6            | " |  |
| 34       | 22     | " 7            | " |  |
| 26       | 24     | " 8            | " |  |
| 30       | 23     | " 9            | " |  |
| 380      | 34     | " 10           | " |  |

Of the 444 children of three to ten years old inclusive, 213, or almost 50 per cent., were under seven years of age. This proves beyond a doubt that Owen's scheme included Infant Schools. It should be noted, too, that in spite of the many references in the *Life: Written by Himself*<sup>1</sup> to children of one and two years of age, no children under three are included in the above table.

In spite of repeated efforts to detract from James Buchanan's worth, Owen was singularly fortunate in the choice of a master to undertake the infant teaching, and we may quote his own account<sup>2</sup>:

It was in vain to look to any old teachers upon the old system of instruction by books. In the previous old schoolroom I had tried to induce the master to adopt my views; but he could not and would not attempt to adopt what he deemed to be such a fanciful "new-fangled" mode of teaching, and he was completely under the influence of the minister of the parish, who was himself also opposed to any change of system in teaching children, and who considered that the attempt to educate and teach infants was altogether a senseless and vain proceeding. I had therefore, although he was a good obstinate "dominie" of the old school, reluctantly to part with him, and I had to seek among the population for two persons who had a great love for and unlimited patience with infants, and who were thoroughly tractable and

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 186, 191, 241.

<sup>2</sup> Pp. 191-2.

willing unreservedly to follow my instructions. The best to my mind in these respects that I could find in the population of the village, was a poor, simple-hearted weaver, named James Buchanan, who had been previously trained by his wife to perfect submission to her will, and who could gain but a scanty living by his now dying trade of weaving common plain cotton goods by hand.<sup>1</sup> But he loved children strongly by nature, and his patience with them was inexhaustible. These, with his willingness to be instructed, were the qualities which I required in the master for the first rational infant school that had ever been imagined by any party in any country; for it was the first practical step of a system new to the world; . . .

Thus the simple-minded, kind-hearted James Buchanan, who at first could scarcely read, write, or spell, became the first master in a rational infant school. But infants so young, also required a female nurse, to assist the master, and one also who possessed the same natural qualifications. Such an one I found among the numerous young females employed in the cotton mills, and I was fortunate in finding for this task a young woman, about seventeen years of age, known familiarly among the villagers as "Molly Young," who of the two, in natural powers of mind, had the advantage over her new companion in an office perfectly new to both.

Owen then adds<sup>1</sup> his two fundamental principles of infant education—he deprecated corporal punishment, and disapproved of the use of books, which it may be recalled constituted Rousseau's negative education for childhood :

The first instruction which I gave them was, that they were on no account ever to beat any one of the children, or to threaten them in any manner in word or action, or to use abusive terms; but were always to speak to them with a pleasant countenance, and in a kind manner and tone of voice. That they should tell the infants and children (for they had all from one to six years

<sup>1</sup> Two paragraphs have been transposed.

## INFANT EDUCATION

old under their charge) that they must on all occasions do all they could to make their playfellows happy,—and that the older ones, from four to six years of age, should take special care of younger ones, and should assist to teach them to make each other happy.

The children were not to be annoyed with books ; but were to be taught the uses and nature or qualities of th. common things around them, by familiar conversation when the children's curiosity was excited so as to induce them to ask questions respecting them.

These instructions were readily received by James Buchanan and Molly Young, and were faithfully adhered to by them as long as they remained in their respective situations.

It is unnecessary to enlarge on Owen's services to infant education. He conceived the idea of educating the infant, poor, he planned the facilities and provided the instructors. The success of his plan and the future of the movement alike attest the soundness of his scheme ; he anticipated by a century the present-day Nursery School movement.



JAMES BUCHANAN.

## JAMES BUCHANAN

1784-1857

THE view that has gained currency regarding James Buchanan is that derived from Owen's disparaging remarks in his autobiography. It should nevertheless be recalled that Owen was approaching eighty-six years of age when he penned his autobiography,<sup>1</sup> that he was consequently recording events and impressions forty years old, that in the interval he had been somewhat disillusioned and embittered by the failure of some of his schemes, and his judgments on men and measures were less charitable than he prided himself they had been in his early manhood. We are now fortunately in a position, through the publication by his granddaughter of the *Buchanan Family Records: James Buchanan and His Descendants*,<sup>2</sup> and the corroboration of

<sup>1</sup> In 1857. See *Life of Robert Owen: Written by Himself* (G. Bell & Sons, London), p. 106.

<sup>2</sup> Printed for Private Circulation. Cape Town: Townshend, Taylor and Snashall, Printers, 1923.

Much of the relevant material contained in this work had previously been communicated by Miss Buchanan to Mr. David Salmon and appeared in an article by him in the Swansea Training College magazine, *The Swan*, No. 45, December 1911.

In June 1931 Miss Buchanan repeated what had appeared in the *Family Records* in a 13-page quarto typed statement addressed to Mr. Salmon, who kindly granted the present writer permission to have a copy made.

The present writer also possesses a MS. letter dated October 12, 1921, from Miss Buchanan, clarifying some of the statements in the previous correspondence, and another dated February 3, 1932, in which she states that Buchanan's letters were distributed among the members of the family who desired them.

## INFANT EDUCATION

correspondence of those who knew him personally, to present an account of James Buchanan which doubtless does our subject more justice, and accords with the far better than the somewhat malicious comments of Owen might lead us to conjecture.

Buchanan was born in Edinburgh, March 10, 1784. He was married in Edinburgh, and was living with his wife at Haddington in 1812, when his son Ebenezer was born. He was originally a weaver, served in the army during the European wars, and was a lay preacher of the Primitive Methodists. Doubtless to secure employment, he moved to New Lanark, presumably from Haddington, in June 1814. Before his arrival in New Lanark he had evidently no communication with Robert Owen. Buchanan's diary records: "In July 1814, I went to New Lanark, being then thirty years. In November, 1816, I commenced my new era, and gave up the diary, a becoming rich or great, content if my life would be useful."

Owen claims<sup>1</sup> that he had taken much time and trouble to contact Buchanan, but this has been contested, and it is asserted that the one idea was to keep the children from harm, and in the beginning neither Owen nor Buchanan had any thought of a school. "He [Owen] simply supplied a bare room without even seats, much less a private, or anything else to occupy, in front of an infant schoolroom." If Owen provided the facilities, Buchanan doubtless evolved the method, being left as it would

<sup>1</sup> Scene of it undated.

<sup>2</sup> *Life: Written by Himself*, pp. 191, 202.

<sup>3</sup> *Buchanan Family Records*, p. 2.

JAMES BUCHANAN

appreciate the  
devices:

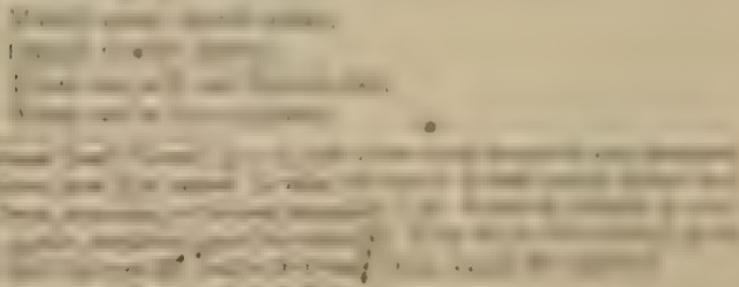
After the first few days of practice, the children were able to sing the hymns without difficulty. The teacher then introduced them to the clapping device, which was a simple form of clapping the hands in time with the music. This device was used to help the children keep time and stay in rhythm.

After a few more days of practice, the children began to move their bodies to the music. The teacher introduced them to simple movements, such as clapping the hands, moving the arms, and swaying from side to side. These movements helped the children to feel the music and stay in rhythm.

As the children became more comfortable with the music and the movements, the teacher introduced them to the clapping device again. This time, however, the children were encouraged to move their bodies in a more expressive way, such as clapping their hands in time with the music, moving their arms in a flowing motion, and swaying from side to side. The teacher also introduced them to simple movements, such as clapping the hands, moving the arms, and swaying from side to side. These movements helped the children to feel the music and stay in rhythm.

After a few more days of practice, the children began to move their bodies to the music. The teacher introduced them to simple movements, such as clapping the hands, moving the arms, and swaying from side to side. These movements helped the children to feel the music and stay in rhythm.

From the beginning, the teacher made abundant use of original rhymes and songs. The rhymes he often set to popular tunes were always set to music. For instance,



correspondence of those who knew him personally,<sup>1</sup> to present an account of James Buchanan which doubtless does our subject more justice, and accords with the facts better than the somewhat malicious comments of Owen might lead us to conjecture.

Buchanan was born in Edinburgh, March 10, 1784. He was married in Edinburgh, and was living with his wife at Haddington in 1812, when his son Ebenezer was born. He was originally a weaver, served in the militia during the European wars, and was a lay-preacher of the Primitive Methodists. Doubtless to secure employment, he moved to New Lanark, presumably from Haddington, in June 1814. Before his arrival in New Lanark he had evidently no communication with Robert Owen. Buchanan's diary records: "In July 1814, I went to Lanark, being then thirty years. In November, 1815, I commenced my new era, and gave up the desire of becoming rich or great, content if my life would be useful."

Owen claims<sup>2</sup> that he had taken much time and trouble to instruct Buchanan, but this has been contested,<sup>3</sup> and it is maintained that the one idea was to keep the children from harm, and in the beginning neither Owen nor Buchanan had any thought of a school. "He [Owen] simply supplied a bare room without even seats, much less toys, pictures, or anything else to occupy, instruct or amuse the children." If Owen provided the facilities, Buchanan doubtless evolved the method, being left, as it would

<sup>1</sup> Some of it undated

<sup>2</sup> *Life: Written by Himself*, pp. 191, 210.

<sup>3</sup> *Buchanan Family Records*, p. 2.

appear from the following account,<sup>1</sup> very much to his own devices :

At New Lanark in the beginning Buchanan made the children march round the room to the strains of his flute.<sup>2</sup> Then he marched them through the village, and allowed them to amuse themselves on the banks of the Clyde, and march back again. But this was not occupation enough, and was apt to be prevented by bad weather, so he had to invent indoor occupation or amusement for them. He began with simple gymnastic movements, arm exercises, clapping the hands, and counting the movements. *Viv<sup>i</sup> voce* lessons followed, arithmetic<sup>s</sup>, tables, etc. Before long the children began their day with him, by all standing, putting their little hands together, and, with closed eyes, repeating after him the Lord's Prayer. Watt's Divine and Moral Songs and similar simple hymns soon followed, and the children never tired of singing them to the accompaniment of his flute. He also gave the little people simple object lessons in which they did most of the talking, and learned to observe and describe. He never grew up, but was always simple-hearted and natural as a child, and had a child's power to imagine and dramatise. The gift made him a delightful raconteur, who never failed to charm children. He loved to tell them Bible stories, which he filled with life and significance.

From the beginning he made abundant use of original rhymes to convey general information and moral principles. The rhymes he often set to popular airs. All that could be set to music was set. For instance, the children trooped in from the playground singing :—

March away, march away,  
Happy to our classes.  
There we will our lessons say,  
When we're in our places.

<sup>1</sup> *Buchanan Family Records*, pp. 3-4, with a few verbal alterations and omissions. Buchanan must have carried on alone the school of New Lanark during 1817, when Owen, according to his own statement—*Life: Written by Himself*, p. 174—was in regular attendance upon the committee of the House of Commons on Sir Robert Peel's Factory Bill, and in 1818 when Owen was on the Continent.

<sup>2</sup> He played it well, although entirely by ear.

## INFANT EDUCATION

Among his rhymes are the following :

Twice one are 2, thumbs up to view,  
" 2 " 4, fingers on the floor,  
" 3 " 6, fingers playing tricks,  
" 4 " 8, count them now they're straight,  
" 5 " 10, all hands up again.

Fishes swim 'in water clear,  
Birds fly up into the air,  
Worms and serpents crawl along,  
But children walk on feet so strong.

For every evil under the sun  
There is a remedy, or there is none.  
If there is one, try to find it ;  
If there is none, never mind it.

Buchanan did not remain long enough at New Lanark to perfect his method.

Henry (later, Lord) Brougham had seen Fellenberg's establishment in 1816, and gave an account of it in 1818, in his evidence before the education committee, appointed by parliament ; in the following winter, his friend, James Mill, of the India House, and himself, had much discussion with R. Owen, respecting the plan, and they were immediately joined by John Smith, M.P. the Marquiss of Lansdown, Zechariah Macaulay, and Thomas Babington, in the attempt to establish an Infant School in Westminster ; in a few weeks they were joined by Lord Dacre, Thomas Baring, Bart. William Leake, M.P. Jos. Wilson, of Spital Fields ; Henry Hase, of the Bank, John Walker, of Southgate, and one or two other friends. R. Owen kindly furnished them with a master, J. Buchanan, who had been superintendent of his Infant School at New Lanark ; and the necessary preparations being completed, the children were received early in the year 1819.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Pole, *Observations Relative to Infant Schools* (1823), p. 8.

Owen presents a somewhat similar account of the opening of the first Infant School in London,<sup>1</sup> but in reply to the request for Buchanan's services said : " Most willingly, for I have pupils who can take his place without any injury to my school," and added quite gratuitously :

I had thought, from the daily instruction which, when at the establishment I had as it were drilled into him for years, that he could now act for himself in a practice which under my direction, with the aid he received from Molly Young, appeared so easy to execute. But I found he could proceed no further in the practice than he had done for some time.

The gentlemen named formed a party to carry the proposed scheme into practice, and a school was erected and furnished, and James Buchanan and his family went to London, and he was appointed master, with full powers over the school.

I now had to appoint and instruct a successor to James Buchanan, and soon one of the new trained pupils, who had passed through our schools, and who was therefore much in advance of his former master as a scholar and in habits, became greatly his superior, and by his youth and vigour, aided by a fine enthusiasm in the cause, which I had been enabled to create in him, a rapid advance and improvement were made in the first year after James Buchanan had left the school, and he, James Buchanan never afterwards saw it.

Had Buchanan been as incompetent as Owen here declares him to have been, it is most unlikely that he would have continued in Infant School work in London for the next twenty years, that he would have been invited to open Infant Schools in different localities in England,<sup>2</sup> and that the " New Zealand Land Company " would have embarked him in 1839 to proceed to New Zealand as " Master of the Infant School."

<sup>1</sup> Life : Written by Himself, p. 196.

<sup>2</sup> Buchanan Family Records, p. 9.

## INFANT EDUCATION

We have fortunately the evidence of one who was instrumental in bringing Badenham to London, namely, Lord Brougham. An article on "Origin of Infant Schools," in *The Edinburgh and Chester Quarterly Review*,<sup>1</sup> for 1847, although anonymous, was unquestionably contributed by Brougham. It elegantly assigns the origin of Infant Schools to J. F. Oberlin, and after mentioning his visit to New Lanark fifteen years after Owen had published his thoughts on education in 1812—he had not recently visited New Lanark, as Owen asserts in his *Recollections*—he presents the following account of the infant school at New Lanark and the part played by Mr. Brougham:

The first education for the younger children grew out of necessity. There was, in the first instance, no especial provision for the infant school, but the young childable were soon to be educated, on the principle that education begins even from the cradle. That this part of the experiment did not succeed, as many similar attempts had failed, and end in failure, all due to their mother of all the little children, the teacher, to the injury accident of a teacher having been struck to the bone in the establishment with the patience, the exact knowledge, and the required for a novel position. James Brougham erected in a task under which all common place of exercise, wedged to bad methods, would have broken down. He found out the art of weaning infantile attention, so as it could be instructed the little ones with pictures and stories, instead of books, and make them happy. His success was general, and the New Lanark children, in great part at least, the best educated, became an object of attraction to visitors. They educated the place for curiosity, amongst whom were some of influence and station, who became devious

<sup>1</sup> See *N.Y. City Review*, May 1847, pp. 229-31.  
See also *Edinburgh Review*, 1847.

## JAMES BUCHANAN

of some similar establishments in England. Hence Brougham, Lord Lansdowne, John Smith, James Mill, Mr. Weston, and others, formed a Committee in 1818, for the object. It erected an asylum<sup>1</sup> for infancy in Brewer's Green, afterwards removed to Vincent Square, Westminster, and borrowed Jane Buchanan of Mr. Owen to conduct it.

Contesting Wilderspin's claim to be the founder of Infant Schools, Brougham concludes:

As a promoter of infant schools, and the most active pro-moter, Wilderspin has well earned the compliment he receives. It was a mistake of the minister to call him the founder, and to give such a title. Wilderspin should himself have ~~been~~ tried to correct it. We do it for him, because the right man, as far as I understand is concerned, is not here to claim his right, and because there is a quiet order of merit which wins our respect by not obstructing it, a quality in those who are only seen by the public when pointed forward by others, and it is one which belongs to James Buchanan.

Further vindication of Buchanan seems uncalled for, but it would be unpallant to leave Mrs. Buchanan under the imputations cast upon her by Owen.<sup>2</sup> We quote Owen's own version of the incident:

But simple and weak-minded as poor Buchanan was, I had taken so much time and trouble to instruct him, and had endeavoured continually to arouse his energies to perceive the importance of the task committed to him, that I fully expected he would in his new position organize and establish his new school after the model of the first, with which he had been made so familiar in its practice. But great were my surprise and horror when I first visited the second infant school, which was

<sup>1</sup> "The first school in the world was founded by James Buchanan at the Cape of Good Hope." — *Life*.

<sup>2</sup> *Life*: Written by himself, pp. 310-11.

We have fortunately the evidence of one who was instrumental in bringing Buchanan to London, namely, Lord Brougham. An article on "Origin of Infant Schools" in *The Westminster and Foreign Quarterly Review*<sup>1</sup> for 1847, although anonymous, was unquestionably contributed by Brougham. In it he rightly assigns the origin of Infant Schools to J. F. Oberlin, and after mentioning his visit to New Lanark fifteen years after Owen had published his thoughts on education in 1812—he had not frequently visited New Lanark, as Owen asserts in his autobiography<sup>2</sup>—he presents the following account of the origin of the Infant School at New Lanark and the part played in it by Buchanan :

The method adopted for the younger children grew out of circumstances. There was, in the first instance, no especial intention of forming an infant school, but the youngest child able to walk was to be admitted, on the principle that education should begin from the cradle. That this part of the experiment did not utterly fail, as many similar attempts had failed, and end in the dismissal home to their mother of all the little children, may be attributed to the happy accident of a teacher having been found for this branch of the establishment with the patience, tact, and inventive faculties required for a novel position. James Buchanan succeeded in a task under which all common-place schoolmasters, wedded to old methods, would have broken down. He found out the art of winning infantile attention,—amused while he instructed his little classes with pictures and objects, instead of books, and made them happy. His success was complete, and the New Lanark children, in great part at least, through his exertions, became an object of attraction to tourists. Thousands visited the place for curiosity; amongst whom were some of influence and station, who became desirous

<sup>1</sup> Vol. XLVI, October 1846—January 1847, pp. 220-2.

<sup>2</sup> *Life: Written by Himself*, p. 196.

of seeing similar establishments in England. Henry Brougham, Lord Lansdowne, John Smith, James Mill, Mr. Wilson, and others, formed a Committee in 1818, for this object. They opened an asylum<sup>1</sup> for infancy in Brewer's Green, afterwards removed to Vincent Square, Westminster, and borrowed James Buchanan of Mr. Owen to conduct it.

Contesting Wilderspin's claim to be the founder of Infant Schools, Brougham concludes :

As a promoter of infant schools, and the agent of their promoters, Wilderspin has well earned the pension he receives. It was a mistake of the minister to call him the founder ; a mistake which Wilderspin should himself have hastened to correct. We do it for him, because the right man, as far as England is concerned, is not here to claim his right,<sup>2</sup> and because there is a quiet order of merit which wins our respect by not obtruding itself ; a quality in those who are only seen by the public when pushed forward by others, and it is one which belongs to James Buchanan.

Further vindication of Buchanan seems uncalled for, but it would be ungallant to leave Mrs. Buchanan under the imputations cast upon her by Owen.<sup>3</sup> We quote Owen's own version of the incident :

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<sup>1</sup> The large brass plate on the door was inscribed, "The Westminster Free Day Infant Asylum."

<sup>2</sup> A footnote adds : "James Buchanan left his country about six years back for the Cape of Good Hope."

<sup>3</sup> *Life : Written by Himself*, pp. 210-11.

situated in Westminster, and was under the auspices of great names and good men, but who themselves knew nothing of the requisite practice, and could not therefore give poor Buchanan the aid and support which he required, and without which it was now evident to me he could do little or nothing that was efficient. On entering the school, the first object which I saw was Mrs. Buchanan, whom I had never seen in the New Lanark school, brandishing a whip, and terrifying the children with it ! Buchanan I saw in another part of the room, apparently without authority or influence, and as much subject to his wife as the children. Upon my unexpected appearance an attempt was made to hide the whip, but the countenances of the children were so different from the open, frank, and happy expression of my children at New Lanark, that they at once told me their position, and the extent of ignorant management to which they had to submit. The room was something of the form of one of the New Lanark infant rooms, but the school was governed in the spirit and manner of the old irrational schools, with the difference only that the children were younger than those received in the old schools.

While such a statement cannot be categorically refuted, it is incompatible with the impression we get of Mrs. Buchanan from the correspondence of those who knew her. She was as practical as her husband was unpractical, and complemented rather than seconded his efforts. Their relationship was of the happiest, and Owen is not the only writer in English literature who has misjudged the relationship of a Scottish husband and wife. It will suffice to quote from a letter of Madame Bodichon (Barbara L. Smith), the daughter of Mr. Benjamin Smith who bought the site and built the Infant School at Carey Street, Vincent Square, Westminster, when it removed from Brewer's Green ; referring to the account of Mrs. Buchanan in Owen's *Life* she says<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Buchanan Family Records*, p. 22.

If he says she was hard, or cruel, or rough, it is quite false. She was a thrifty, bustling, managing, shrewd Scotchwoman. Mr. Buchanan was very unpractical, childlike, thriftless, and everything the reverse of his wife. He would take the dirtiest little imp up in his arms, kiss it, and teach it :

'Do to others as you would  
That they should do to thee,  
'Twill make you happy, kind and good,  
As children ought to be.

But Mrs. Buchanan would seize it and carry it off to the bathroom attached to the school, and wash it from head to heel, and then set it down in its place. She was in her element in that bathroom, and she knew there was no better way of pleasing my Father than by washing the dirty little ragged creatures who came utterly neglected to the school. One penny a week was the charge, but Mr. Buchanan was not very exact in exacting it.

My Father spent above £1,000 on the buildings of the school—baths, gallery, playground, etc.—and for that time it was a very good school, more like a Ragged School than a National Infant School. Mrs. Buchanan and Annie, her daughter, were the real bones of the school ; Mr. Buchanan was too uncertain ever to have supported the weight of the whole himself. His influence over the children was perfectly marvellous. He believed they were all angels, and treated them with the most extraordinary patience and tenderness. I have seen the poor little things clustering on him like hiving bees, all trying to caress him. In the school he was always possessed with sympathy for his little ones quite exceeding any mother's I ever saw.

Pole, refuting Wilderspin's arguments justifying corporal punishment, cites the practice of the Bristol Infant School<sup>1</sup> conducted by D. G. Goyder, presumably, "the master who was trained in the Brewer's Green School,

<sup>1</sup> *Observations Relative to Infant Schools* (1823), p. 51.

Westminster,"<sup>1</sup> and evidently relying on Goyder's experience declares, "I am likewise informed that in the school at Brewer's Green, Westminster, no corporeal punishment has ever been introduced, and that it is nevertheless, conducted to entire satisfaction."

Buchanan continued Infant School teaching at Vincent Square, London, for almost twenty years with only about a year's intermission, when he went to Derbyshire to open a second Infant School there, and that he must have retained some reputation may be inferred from the following incident<sup>2</sup>:

Buchanan took it for granted that visitors to the school wanted to see the work that was being done, so he just went on as usual. One day all the children were seated in the semi-circular gallery at one end of the schoolroom, and Buchanan was standing in front of them giving them a lesson, when he found that a gentleman and two young ladies were beside him, and apparently much interested. He went on with his work, and the children sang some of their little songs, finishing with the National Anthem. The gentleman then volunteered to sing to the children, and sang the alphabet to the tune of the National Anthem. After expressing much pleasure and appreciation, the visitors left, and Buchanan discovered that they were King William IV, his niece (then) Princess Victoria, and a Spanish Princess.

In 1839 Buchanan decided to go to New Zealand to start Infant Schools. Under the auspices of the "New Zealand Land Company" he set sail in November. But when he reached Cape Town his eldest son, who was residing there, persuaded him to go no farther. As soon as they heard of this decision, Mrs. Buchanan and her daughter, who

<sup>1</sup> *Observations Relative to Infant Schools* (1833), p. 44.

<sup>2</sup> *Buchanan Family Records*, p. 9.

### JAMES BUCHANAN

were still carrying on the Vincent Square School, gave it up and joined him in Cape Town. Mrs. Buchanan lived but a short time after this, and in 1856 Buchanan went on to Pietermaritzburg, where his other two sons had settled, and there he remained till his death on January 14 1857.



## SAMUEL WILDERSPIN

1792 (?)—1866

WHATEVER his failings, and they ever leaned to the side of virtue, Buchanan must be credited with engaging the attention of Samuel Wilderspin in infant education. Wilderspin accidentally, or providentially, as he himself expressed it,<sup>1</sup> had met Buchanan at the house of a friend in London, and thus became acquainted with the idea of Infant Schools. He thereafter visited Buchanan's school at Vincent Square, Westminster, and appeared so interested that Buchanan undertook to train him as a teacher. After a short period of training Wilderspin was appointed a teacher in the school newly opened by Mr. Wilson at Quaker Street, Spitalfields. Wilderspin explains<sup>2</sup>:

The Infant School in Quaker Street, Spitalfields, was opened July the 24th, 1820, and twenty-six children were admitted the first day; the next day twenty-one; on the 31st sixty-five, and on the 7th of August, thirty-eight; at which last date I and my wife were engaged by Joseph Wilson, Esq. to take the management thereof. This gentleman built the school-room, and supplied every thing necessary, at his own expense, and settled our salary.

For a considerable time Buchanan, with his son Ebenezer

<sup>1</sup> *Early Discipline Illustrated*, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> *Infant Education; or Remarks on the Importance of Educating the Infant Poor*, 3rd edition, 1825, p. 15.



SAMUEL WILDERSPIN.

as a model pupil, walked every morning the long distance to Spitalfields to open the school and start Wilderspin on the day's work.<sup>1</sup> Owen also lent a hand in establishing Wilderspin at Spitalfields, recording in his autobiography<sup>2</sup>:

Being informed of this third school, I went to see it, and on conversing with Wilderspin, I learned he had been often to see the Westminster school. I told him that was a very inferior model to copy; and finding him very desirous and willing to learn, and much more teachable than my first master, having much more talent and tact for the business, I gave him general and minute instruction how to act with the children, and to govern them without punishment, by affection and undeviating kindness. He seemed fully to appreciate this attention to him, and requested I would come as often as I could to instruct him, and give him the benefit of my experience. I did so, and had great pleasure in thus teaching him, finding that no part of my instruction was disregarded, but that what I recommended was faithfully followed. And he became an apt disciple of the spirit and practice of the system, so far as the outward and material mode was concerned. But as a first step towards forming a rational character for a rational system of society, he had no powers of mind to comprehend it. And I did not attempt to advance his knowledge so as to unfit him to act under the patronage of his then supporters.

That Wilderspin stood much in need of such assistance he later frankly confessed in his description of his first day's experience<sup>3</sup>:

As soon as the mothers had left the premises, I attempted to engage the attention of their offspring. 'I shall never forget the effort. A few, who had been previously at a dame-school, sat quietly; but the rest, missing their parents, crowded about the

<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Family Record, p. 8.      <sup>2</sup> Life: Written by Himself, pp. 211-12.

<sup>3</sup> Early Discipline Illustrated, pp. 3-4.

door. One little fellow, finding he could not open it, set up a loud cry of " Mammy ! Mammy ! " and, in raising this *delightful* sound, all the rest simultaneously joined. My wife, who, though reluctant at first, had determined, on my accepting the situation, to give me her utmost aid, tried with myself, to calm the tumult ; but our efforts were utterly in vain. The paroxysm of sorrow increased instead of subsiding, and so intolerable did it become that she could endure it no longer, and left the room ; and, at length, exhausted by effort, anxiety, and noise, I was compelled to follow her example, leaving my unfortunate pupils in one dense mass, crying, yelling, and kicking against the door !

I will not attempt to describe my feelings ; but, ruminating on what I then considered egregious folly in supposing that any two persons could manage so large a number of infants, I was struck by the sight of a cap of my wife's, adorned with coloured ribbon, lying on the table ; and observing from the window a clothes-prop, it occurred that I might put the cap upon it, return to the school, and try the effect. The confusion when I entered was tremendous ; but on raising the pole surmounted by the cap, all the children, to my great satisfaction, were instantly silent ; and when any hapless wight seemed disposed to renew the noise, a few shakes of the prop restored tranquillity, and, perhaps, produced a laugh. The same thing, however, will not do long ; the charms of this *wonderful* instrument therefore soon vanished, and there would have been a sad relapse but for the marchings, gambols, and antics, I found it necessary to adopt, and which, at last, brought the hour of twelve, to my greater joy than can easily be conceived.

Revolving these circumstances, I felt that that memorable morning had not passed in vain. I had, in fact, found the clue. It was now evident that the senses of the children must be engaged ; that the great secret of training them was to descend to their level, and become a child ;—and that the error had been to expect in infancy what is only the product of after years.

In his earliest works Wilderspin candidly acknowledges his indebtedness to Buchanan and Owen. He admits that a part of his plan was not his own, but was taught him by

the Master of the Westminster Infant School<sup>1</sup>; and he concedes<sup>2</sup>: "As far as I know, Mr. Owen is the first person with whom originated the idea of educating infant children, upon an extensive scale"; and adds<sup>3</sup>:

Having taken the liberty of mentioning the name of Mr. Owen, I take the opportunity of returning my sincere thanks to that gentleman, for having visited the Spitalfields Infant School three or four times. He has been pleased to express his approbation of the system there pursued, and during these visits has dropped many useful hints, for which I beg most humbly to thank him.

Success nevertheless induced him to recant these admissions. In *Early Discipline Illustrated*<sup>4</sup> he speaks as if, on his first introduction to Buchanan, he had already formulated definite views on infant education, and mentioning a meeting with Buchanan when the latter was in Derbyshire on leave from his school in London to establish a second Infant School in that county, he speaks of Buchanan in these patronising terms:

In this neighbourhood I found Mr. Buchanan; a conversation with whom led, as has been related, to my becoming an Infant teacher. He had been for some time in charge of a school supported by a lady, but as two of his children were apprenticed in London, he and his wife were not very comfortable. I therefore wrote to some friends respecting him, who engaged him for a school in the metropolis, where I am glad to say he now is.

In his evidence before the Select Committee on the State of Education in England, 1834-5, Wilderspin definitely advanced his claim to be the founder of Infant Schools.

<sup>1</sup> *On the Importance of Educating the Infant Poor*, 2nd edition, 1824, p. 39, footnote.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 178.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 181.

<sup>4</sup> (1832), pp. 2, 74. Cf. *The Buchanan Records*, p. 9.

INFLUENCE OF EDUCATION

On Aug. 1846.

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Time

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SAMUEL WEISBERG

196. A man young

book, and the tree who

the sun

## INFANT EDUCATION

On August 6, 1834,<sup>1</sup> in answer to the chairman, Lord John Russell, the Lord Chancellor (Lord Brougham) gave his version of the origin of Infant Schools. He stated that they—

were begun in 1818 by myself and a few friends (J. Smith, J. Mill and Marquis of Lansdowne were of the number) and they were afterwards taken up by the Established Church. I observe Mr. Wilson, in speaking of his excellent infant school at Walthamstow (the best anywhere to be seen), says his brother had previously established one in Spitalfields, and that he believed there had been another. No doubt there had, and his brother, having belonged to our original committee, had taken the plan of our first school, established at Brewer's Green, Westminster, the year before, and formed the admirable one in Quaker-street. Ours was under J. Buchanan, whom we obtained from Robert Owen's great manufactory at New Lanark. Mr. Wilson's was under Mr. Wilderspin, whose very able works on the subject have been of great use in promoting these useful establishments ; but the first infant school in this island, I believe in the world, was the one at Brewer's-green ; R. Owen's and Mr. Fellenberg's, which gave the idea, having been both formed in connexion with an establishment, manufacturing or agricultural, and so necessarily confined in their application ; ours being every-day schools, where the children are neither fed nor in any way helped, except by instruction and training.<sup>2</sup>

On June 18, 1835, the Earl of Kerry in the Chair, Wilderspin was called on to give evidence<sup>3</sup> and the questions and answers relevant to our problem are as follows :

<sup>1</sup> Report from Select Committee on the State of Education, with the Minutes of Evidence and Index. Ordered, by the House of Commons, to be Printed, August 7, 1834, pp. 167-9.

<sup>2</sup> Brougham had not yet heard of Oberlin.

<sup>3</sup> Report from the Select Committee on Education in England and Wales, together with Minutes of Evidence. Ordered, by the House of Commons, to be Printed, August 3, 1835, pp. 13-37.

Q. 103. At what time was the first Infant school founded? Lord Brougham considers the first Infant school was founded in 1818. A mere assembling of young children is not an Infant school. I consider the first systematised school was commenced in the beginning of 1820.

104. When you speak of a school on a systematised plan, you mean that known by the name of Wilderspin's plan? Yes; I fancy myself the author of a plan for infant training. I think I was the first who gave a detailed account of the system in my book, and the first who practically proved its utility.

105. To the education of children of what age does that system extend? From as soon as they can walk to seven years old.

148. What was the origin of the infant system? I believe the origin was at Lanark; at least the idea of assembling a number of infants together to make them happy originated there.

149. With Mr. Owen? With Mr. Owen.

150. And since that it has progressed very rapidly? Yes; but there was then no system to bring it to bear. It was merely assembling together a number of infants; and, moreover, Mr. Owen himself visited me often, and told me he thought it time enough to begin to teach a child to read when he was seven years old.

151. Then the present system you consider to have originated in 1820? Yes.

On the title-page of *A System for the Education of the Young*, published in 1840, Wilderspin subscribes himself: "Inventor of the System of Infant Training." He was evidently taken at his own valuation, for on August 13, 1846, he was granted a Civil List Pension<sup>1</sup> of £100 per annum "in consideration of his services in promoting Infant schools." This was too much for Lord Brougham, and the controversy which this occasioned may be best

<sup>1</sup> A List of all Pensions granted between the 20th day of June 1846 and 20th day of June 1847 charged upon the Civil List. Ordered, by the House of Commons, to be Printed, July 2, 1847.

## INFANT EDUCATION

related in the terms used in contemporary accounts. *The Times*, Tuesday, August 4, 1846, under "Parliamentary Intelligence, House of Lords, Monday, August 3," reports<sup>1</sup>:

Lord Brougham moved for a return of all pensions granted since the 1st of January, 1838, out of the 1,200*l.* fund, stating the yearly amount, and whether the recipient held any permanent place under Government at the date of the grant. In moving for this return he had no design of objecting to any pension granted by the present or the late Governments, for they appeared to him to have been dictated by a judicious exercise of the Royal favour; and the last occasion on which the power had been exercised met perhaps his approval more than any other; he meant the pension to Mr. Wilderspin, one of the persons most actively employed in a valuable branch of education. But he must correct an historical error into which his noble friend at the head of the Government had fallen; for, though an historian, he had allowed his poetical imagination to get the better of the stern fact, when he gave to Mr. Wilderspin the credit of being the founder as well as the promoter of infant schools. They were founded in 1800 by Oberlin; and afterwards in 1810 they were adopted by Fellenberg. As early, however, as 1802, Mr. Robert Owen had followed them at New Lanark, which had been seen by hundreds. Some time afterwards Mr. John Smith, late a member of the other house, himself (Lord Brougham), the Marquis of Lansdowne, Mr. Mill. Mr. Fowell Buxton, Mr. Wilberforce, Mr. Wilson, and three others, subscribed 100*l.* each, and established a school in London, for which they procured from Mr. Owen the assistance of Mr. Buchanan, as master, and he remained 20 years. Mr. Wilson, one of their body, next founded a school at Spitalfields, and it was for that school that he obtained the services of Mr. Wilderspin, which were indeed beyond all praise from him. It was certain, therefore, that Robert Owen was the founder of infant schools in this country, and that Mr. Wilderspin was not the founder though he was an active promoter. No man, however, more deserved a testimonial—for testimonials it was the fashion to call them, now

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Hansard's *Parliamentary Debates*, July 1846, pp. 274-5.

## SAMUEL WILDERSPIN

they were so common that at the end of a successful season the manager of the opera had his testimonial, or tribute, as it was called in Ireland,—in no case had it been more innocently gained, or more richly deserved, than by Mr. Wilderspin.

The Marquis of Lansdowne observed, that the noble and learned lord opposite could not at any period of his forensic career have put any witness into the box more fully prepared than he was to confirm the statement which the house had just heard. He concurred in all that had been said in approval of the labours of Mr. Wilderspin; but he also went along with the noble and learned lord when he stated that Mr. Robert Owen was the founder of all infant schools. \*He always had considered Mr. Owen to have been the founder of those schools, although no one contributed more to their extension than did Mr. Wilderspin. The names of Wilderspin and Oberlin would long be gratefully remembered in connexion with those schools. He had himself seen the system as promoted by Mr. Wilderspin at full work in Dublin, and he was able to testify most unequivocally to its beneficial results. Mr. Wilderspin's merits were of a high order, although the design of those schools originated with Mr. Owen.

In *The Times*, Saturday, August 8, 1846, under the heading "National Education," appeared a letter to the Editor with two others appended, one addressed to Lord Brougham, the second to the Marquis of Lansdowne. We reproduce only Wilderspin's covering note and the letter to Brougham :

To the Editor of *The Times*

SIR, I trust to your known love of justice to insert the two inclosed letters, in reply to the observations made by the nobleman addressed. As they were made in public in your widely circulated paper, the antidote should appear through the same channel.

I have the honour to be, Sir, your obedient servant,

SAMUEL WILDERSPIN.

Barton-upon-Humber, August 6.

## INFANT EDUCATION

To the Right Hon. Lord Brougham and Vaux.

My LORD,

I have this moment seen in *The Times* newspaper the report of a speech stated to have been made by your Lordship in the House of Lords, in which your Lordship is made to state—That the head of the government had fallen into error in calling me the founder of infant schools, for that they were founded by Oberlin, and in 1810 by Fellenburg, and as early as 1802 by Robert Owen. To such infant schools, my lord, I must put in a much earlier claim—not for myself, but for the old dames of England.

With regard to Robert Owen, and the system which Buchanan brought from Lanark, your Lordship must be aware that the room at Brewer's-green was called an "asylum" as was also the one afterwards established at Vincent-square; and that both contained a mere assemblage of children of all ages, from two to 14 years of age, and were in fact what they purported to be, asylums as a refuge for destitute children, but not infant schools conducted upon the system now known as the infant-school system. Buchanan did not become an infant teacher, nor did his school become an infant school until it had been reorganised by me, and he himself had been instructed by me, at the express wish of the committee, of whom I believe your Lordship was a member. The system, therefore, which Buchanan taught for 20 years, was not Mr. Owen's, or his own, but mine. If, therefore, your Lordship means to state that Oberlin, Fellenburg, or Robert Owen, was the founder or inventor of the present infant-school system with its various arrangements, details and implements, I must demur to your Lordship's decision, and put in a claim for myself, which I have no doubt, if spared, I shall be able to establish as an historical fact, although there may be some persons who entertain doubts on the case.

I have the honour to be, my Lord,  
Your Lordship's most obedient very humble servant,

SAMUEL WILDERSPIN.

Barton-upon-Humber, August 6.

SAMUEL WILDERSPIN

Brougham replied in the article on "Origin of Infant Schools" in the *Westminster Review*, to which reference has already been made,<sup>1</sup> in the following judicial pronouncement :

From the close connexion of National Education with Infant Schools (for day schools for the poor can only embrace children below a working age) we take this opportunity to correct some mistakes in circulation about their present state and origin. . . .

Wilderspin knew nothing of infant-school training but what he learned in Vincent square, or from the evidence of Robert Owen [before the Commission on the Education of the Lower Orders in June 1816]. His own claims to originality rest upon nothing but the modifications he has introduced into the system, some better and some worse<sup>2</sup> than those of his predecessor, and upon a wire-drawn distinction between infant schools and infant asylums. He re-introduced and gave the name of "Arithmeticon" to an instrument described by Mr. Friend, in a work on arithmetic, fifty years ago; but besides this has done little, compared with Miss Mayo and others, to raise infant school education to what Chambers describes as "the science it now is," although a science it is not to this day. Wilderspin was never skilful in the organisation of a school, but he was a good gallery teacher, and a good missionary.<sup>3</sup> His chief usefulness has consisted in his great zeal and activity. These having brought him into notice, he was one time made superintendent of the model schools of the Irish Educational Board in Dublin; but his qualifications were found of too humble a character to allow of his retaining the appointment. We should scarcely be disposed to mention this but for his letters in the "Times" of August 8 which practi-

<sup>1</sup> *The Westminster and Foreign Quarterly Review*, October 1846–January 1847, vol. XLVI, 1847, pp. 220–2.

<sup>2</sup> The punishments introduced by Wilderspin were vigorously condemned by Pole, pp. 48–54.

<sup>3</sup> Before the present writer had encountered Brougham's article he had contributed to *The Scottish Educational Journal*, July 27, 1928, an article on Wilderspin's visit to Scotland exactly a century previously, entitled, "An Educational Missionary."

## INFANT EDUCATION

cally deny the obligations of the country to his own early patrons. As a promoter of infant schools, and the agent of their promoters Wilderspin has well earned the pension he receives. It was a mistake of the minister to call him their founder; a mistake which Wilderspin should himself have hastened to correct.

Wilderspin might have been well content to<sup>o</sup> rest his claim to fame on the extension of Infant Schools; Brougham aptly and rightly referred to him as a missionary of the Infant School movement. From the outset he would appear to have been called to this office. Some years after the London Infant Schools had been established, "a very numerous and highly respectable meeting," as a contemporary report puts it, was held on Monday, June 7, 1824, for the purpose of forming an Infant School Society. A full account of the proceedings is given in Wilderspin's *Infant Education; or Remarks on the Importance of Educating the Infant Poor*,<sup>1</sup> in which the following announcement is made:<sup>2</sup>

*The Committee have engaged Mr. Wilderspin, of the Spitalfields Infant School, to go into the Country, at the request of any Lady or Gentleman, to open schools according to the method now in practice.*

This became his vocation, and in *Early Discipline Illustrated; or, The Infant System Progressing and Successful*<sup>3</sup> he presents an interesting account of his travels. He offered to proceed to Jamaica, but seeking the consent of the Committee the claims of his own country were urged, and he was gradually brought to concur.<sup>4</sup> Later he says<sup>5</sup> that nothing could have induced him to visit either Scotland

<sup>1</sup> Third edition, 1825, pp. 17-52.

<sup>2</sup> 1832.

<sup>4</sup> P. 13.

<sup>3</sup> P. 48.

<sup>5</sup> P. 26.

or Ireland : " But I knew not then that my affections were to be weaned from some of these objects, and that I was to be the instrument of opening numerous schools in the United Kingdom." His energy was remarkable. He travelled all over England, visited Scotland twice at the request of David Stow, Wales twice, and Ireland. The enumeration of the towns he visited in Scotland,<sup>1</sup> and his interesting glimpses of Scottish scenery, life,<sup>2</sup> customs and education, reads like an early edition of *In Search of Scotland*. Even a people who had at that time acquired a reputation for love of education Wilderspin inspired with a new enthusiasm for the subject, and the Infant School movement is one of the brightest chapters in the history of Scottish education. Would that we possessed to-day a Wilderspin with the same missionary zeal for education, who could effect for Nursery Schools what Wilderspin did for Infant Schools a hundred years ago.

<sup>1</sup> *Early Discipline Illustrated*, chs. vi, vii, viii, ix, x.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 199.

Visiting Perth he saw for the first time golf played, and thus described it : " Gentlemen and youth may also be seen, attired in scarlet, like sportsmen here, amusing themselves with the game of golf. It is something like billiards on a large scale. A small white ball is provided, which is struck with a thin stick having a knob at the end ; it goes, in consequence, a considerable distance, is followed and then struck again ; on arriving at a marked spot, effort is made to strike it into a hole, and he who can accomplish this wins the game. This sport appears to yield great pleasure."

## DAVID STOW

1793-1864

ONE of the many popular fallacies about Scottish education is that David Stow initiated the Infant School movement. After what has been stated above, it is unnecessary to refute this misconception. Stow himself would have been the last to advance such a claim. As the writer pointed out in *The Training of Teachers in Scotland: An Historical Review*,<sup>1</sup> Stow himself declared that "in 1820 he visited Mr. Wilderspin's Infant School in Spitalfields which had commenced but a short time before." "The first half-hour's observation of the system there pursued," he adds,<sup>2</sup> "seemed to supply to our mind that germ of a system of education which, upon sound Christian principles and superintendence, could not fail under the blessing of God, morally to elevate society." Stow could not likewise have been ignorant of the literature on the subject. Owen's *A New View of Society* and his evidence in 1816 before Brougham's Committee on the *Education of the Lower Orders* might both have escaped his notice; but as he had visited Wilderspin at Spitalfields and evidently kept in touch with him, a copy of Wilderspin's work, *On the Import-*

<sup>1</sup> P. 26. The dates in this chapter differ from those usually given, but for documentary evidence from contemporary sources supporting them the reader is referred to the author's *The Training of Teachers in Scotland*.

<sup>2</sup> *Third Report of the Glasgow Educational Society's Normal Seminary, 1836.*



DAVID STOW.

ance of *Educating the Infant Poor*, would doubtless come into his hands, and if he did not encounter Pole's *Observations Relative to Infant Schools*, which appeared almost simultaneously with Wilderspin's work, he would most probably see the article on it, ascribed to Brougham, which appeared in *The Edinburgh Review* for May 1823, under the title, "Early Moral Education." The Rev. William Wilson, vicar of Walthamstow, and brother of Joseph Wilson, who installed Wilderspin at Spitalfields, published in 1826 his *System of Infants' Education*, and in May 1826 the Rev. Dr. Charles Mayo delivered at the Royal Institution a lecture on *Observations on the Establishment and Direction of Infants' Schools* and another on *The Principles of Pestalozzi*, the substance of the former being published<sup>1</sup> in 1827, "the profits (if any) to be applied toward the support of Infants' Schools."

To trace any original feature in the Glasgow Infant School Society, founded in 1827 mainly through the "judicious and unwearied" exertions of Stow, or in the first Infant School of that Society opened in the Drygate on April 23, 1828, is likewise difficult. The playground prominent in the frontispiece of Stow's *Granny and Leezey*,<sup>2</sup> had been an essential feature of Owen's New Institution; in *Infant Education*<sup>3</sup> Wilderspin refers to the playground in which fruit-trees are planted "to which the children will not do the least injury, nor will they touch the fruit." Pole, in his *Observations Relative to Infant Schools*,<sup>4</sup> regards

<sup>1</sup> L. B. Seeley & Sons, London.

<sup>2</sup> Fifth edition, 1818, an expanded form of *Infant Training: A Dialogue explanatory of the System Adopted in the Model Infant School*, by a Director (Glasgow, 1833).

<sup>3</sup> Third edition, 1825; p. 137.

<sup>4</sup> Pp. 29, 76-8.

the playground as essential, and in a footnote<sup>1</sup> refers the reader to Wilderspin's remarks on this subject.

Stow designates<sup>2</sup> the method followed in the first Glasgow Infant School "our elliptical and interrogatory system"; it is frequently referred to as "picturing out," and is described thus:

The master, in the progress of the story or picturing-out, pauses for an instant, and affords the children an opportunity of filling up the obvious meaning. The stimulating power of this mixture of questions and ellipses is self-evident, particularly in practice; and at the same time, we believe, it cultivates fully more correct feelings than any other principle of emulation.

Wilderspin can nevertheless claim priority, for in the Preface<sup>3</sup> to *Infant Education*, he begs "to call the reader's attention to the elliptical plan of teaching; specimens of which will be found in the Appendix."

Stow's early references to "The Training System" did not refer to the training of teachers, but to the moral training of the pupils, and his emphasis on this feature of the Infant School might lead a reader of his works to infer that this was peculiar to the Glasgow Infant School and its successors, but moral training was the theme of Dr. Mayo's lecture at the Royal Institution, and is common to Owen, Wilderspin and Pole. Brougham's review of Pole's *Observations Relative to Infant Schools*, as mentioned above, was entitled "Early Moral Education."

In the training of teachers for Infant Schools Stow had likewise been anticipated. In *A New View of Society*<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Observations Relative to Infant Schools*, p. 78.

<sup>2</sup> R. R. Rusk, *The Training of Teachers in Scotland*, pp. 40-1.

<sup>3</sup> Third edition, 1825.

<sup>4</sup> 1816, p. 159.

Owen declared that an Act should be passed "For the establishment of seminaries, in which those individuals, who shall be destined to form the minds and bodies of the future subjects of these realms, should be well initiated in the art and matter of instruction." The circular of the London Infant School Society, issued on July 16, 1824, refers to the special object for which the society was formed, and continues<sup>1</sup>:

That object is to establish, in some central part of the metropolis, an infant school which may exemplify the principles now explained; and which, while it dispenses its benefits to the adjoining population, may also serve as a model of imitation with respect to its mechanism, and as a seminary for training and qualifying masters and mistresses to form and superintend similar institutions.

In the meantime, and until sufficient funds shall have been obtained for accomplishing this object, the committee have resolved to accept the liberal offer of Mr. Joseph Wilson, to employ his infant school in Quaker-street, Spitalfields, for teaching the mechanical parts of the system, to such masters or mistresses as may be sent thither for instruction.

Applications for this purpose may be addressed to Mr. James P. Greaves, at Quaker-street, Spitalfields.

Pole also devoted a section of his *Observations Relative to Infant Schools*<sup>2</sup> to the training of infant teachers; and regarded the Bristol Infant School as a model school for this purpose. \*

Even if Wilderspin did not acknowledge his indebtedness to James Buchanan for training him, David G. Goyder, who was in charge of Pole's Bristol school, was "regularly

<sup>1</sup> S. Wilderspin, *Infant Education; or Remarks on the Importance of Educating the Infant Poor*, 3rd edition, 1825, p. 47.

<sup>2</sup> P. 80.

and properly trained”<sup>1</sup> “in the Brewer’s Green School”<sup>2</sup> and the *Buchanan Family Records*<sup>3</sup> mention that another of Buchanan’s pupils “was Thomas Bilby who also published a book on the Infant School System.” Buchanan thus seems to have been the first trainer of Infant School teachers in this country.

Molly Young co-operated with James Buchanan at New Lanark, and Mrs. Buchanan assisted her husband in London. Wilderspin, answering a series of questions that had been put concerning Infant Schools, includes<sup>4</sup>:

*Q.* Are active thinking women as competent to the duty of the development of infant sympathy, as men?

*A.* In everything but physical strength.

Pole<sup>5</sup> devotes a section to “Qualifications of a Master or Mistress of an Infant School.” Stow cannot accordingly be credited even with assigning a definite place to women in the scheme of infant training.

What then were Stow’s services to infant education? He had come to realise how ineffectual were the efforts of Sunday School work, in which he had become actively engaged on coming from Paisley to Glasgow, if these were not reinforced by similar influences throughout the week; he also recognised, like Owen, that the pre-school stage of development was all-important for the later life of the pupil. He acknowledged that a great inroad had been made upon the old Parish School methods by Bell’s Madras system.

<sup>1</sup> Pole’s *Observations Relative to Infant Schools*, p. 54.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 44. <sup>3</sup> P. 9.

<sup>4</sup> *Infant Education*, 3rd edition, p. 274.

<sup>5</sup> *Observations Relative to Infant Schools*, pp. 80-1.

The principles of tuition, indeed, have undergone an entire revolution : the time of the children is better employed ; with less punishment a more effective discipline is maintained ; more instruction is conveyed ; branches of education are introduced, which, at a former period, were never thought of ; and thus the period of boyhood is rendered more immediately subservient to the business of after life.

" Still," he adds,<sup>1</sup> " it is to be observed that the efforts of the teacher are limited in their object. It is the intellect merely to which his attention is confined, while the state of the affections is comparatively neglected." While agreeing also in this respect with Owen, Stow realised that it was necessary, if the Infant School movement was to be successful in Scotland, to dissociate it from Owen's rationalistic views and socialistic schemes, and to bring it under the ægis of the Church. Thus in the *First Annual Report of the Glasgow Infant School Society*,<sup>2</sup> there is a but thinly veiled reference to Owen :

In speaking of moral and religious tuition, the Committee think it necessary to explain, that they are satisfied that no permanently beneficial effect can be produced upon the character, but by the application of the truth of the Gospel to the heart. It is a fundamental part of the new system, therefore, as adopted by them, that this truth should be set before the mind ; and they conceive all their practices really valuable, only in so far as this end is accomplished. . . .

These remarks, it is hoped, may remove the objection that is sometimes made against Infant Schools, as if those who support them were to be numbered with those who conceive, that the condition of society, depends wholly upon education, and that man has it in his own power to banish vice and misery out of the world.

<sup>1</sup> *First Annual Report of the Glasgow Infant School Society*, 1829, p. 11.

<sup>2</sup> Pp. 15-16.

To signalise the religious basis of the Infant School movement in Scotland, Stow associated with himself as joint secretary of the Glasgow Infant School Society the Rev. David Welsh, translated to one of the city charges in 1827.

It was also at Stow's invitation that Wilderspin came north to initiate Mr. and Mrs. David Caughe into the work of the school in the Drygate, and thereafter to travel Scotland to advocate the general adoption of Infant Schools. In this task Wilderspin found his *métier*, and he continued to speak in the most appreciative terms of his reception and treatment in Scotland.

Stow, while he did not originate the training of Infant School teachers, held fast to the view that a mature mind was essential to teaching ; he opposed the monitorial and pupil-teachership systems, and when the enthusiasm for the Infant School movement began to wane he retained and developed the idea of a trained teaching profession.

Even in the light of the additional knowledge which readier access to local sources has made available to the present writer, the estimate of Stow by David Salmon<sup>1</sup> does not require amendment : " Stow deserves well of his country, but his claim to be remembered as a thinker rests rather upon his reassertion of old truths than upon his enunciation of new ones."

<sup>1</sup> *Infant Schools : Their History and Theory*, p. 75.



THE KINDERGARTEN  
From a painting by Claus Meyer (1856-1919), by permission of the Director of the Badische Kunsthalle, Karlsruhe.

## THE STATE AND INFANT SCHOOLS

INFANT Schools were amongst the first of the schools on behalf of which claims were advanced to participate in the grant of £20,000 voted by Parliament in 1833 for the building of schools, or "schoolhouses," as they were then called. The right of inspection of all schools aided by public money was required by the Lords of the Committee of Council on Education appointed in 1839 to disburse this and later grants, and amongst the earliest instructions<sup>1</sup> issued to inspectors of schools "in proceeding to inspect the method and matter of instruction, and the character of the discipline established in the several schools by the grants of this committee" were the following *Special Questions on Infant Schools*<sup>2</sup>:

### *Mechanical Arrangements*

1. Are the walls lined with a broad belt of black board, or prepared with mastic, painted black, for lessons in chalk-drawing and writing?
2. Is a small gallery prepared with desks and boards for the instruction of 40 children in drawing, and in the signs of sounds?

### *Recreation and Physical Exercises*

3. What amusements have the Children?
4. What games are encouraged?

<sup>1</sup> Issued August 1840, see *Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, 1839-40.*

<sup>2</sup> Pp. 43-5.

9. うらやまの心

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(1) Answers

number, and when are the boundaries?

and the ( ) - time.

is there any other boundary?

(Answers)

Answers:

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After almost a hundred years these instructions might be reissued with a advantage to some Infant Schools to-day.

In the *Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education for 1845*,<sup>1</sup> Mr. Fletcher, Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools, having been instructed to report on the schools in connection with the British and Foreign Society, seized the occasion to devote to Infant Schools almost the whole of his review, justifying this restriction by remarking that "although they come last in the history of schooling, they come first in the history of the scholar." He refers to the readiness of the mother of a working-man's family to make a sacrifice of some pence per week to have the young children bestowed in some "out-of-the-way school"—"an expressive designation which she is very apt to give to the little congregation of infants in the kitchen of some neighbouring dame." Thereafter, and we shall quote at some length, for this Report impressed the Newcastle Commissioners and helped largely to determine their attitude to infant education, he continues :

No evidence of the growth of enlarged views on the subject of education is more gratifying or conclusive than the extent to which this want of the parents has, in recent years, been perceived and supplied, no germ of moral strength in our uneasy social state is more hopeful than the promptness with which the parents have availed themselves of the advantages of infant education thrown open to them. No efforts to carry health and peace, and hope amidst the teeming population of our smoking towns are more deserving of every favour from the State than those which seek to open a way for its "little ones" to Him who has said "Suffer little children to come unto me." Not that these schools are any of them perfect; not that many of them are without serious defects; not that the "dames" from

<sup>1</sup> Vol. II, pp. 212-37.

## THE STATE AND INFANT SCHOOLS

whom the children are withdrawn are always without affection or merit ; but, as a whole, the little world of the modern infant school is one with which no other popular provision for infant education will bear a moment's comparison ; and in the course of improvement in which it appears to be embarked, its preparatory labours will constantly increase in value as they become wider in scope and less ambitious in their immediate aim.

Comparing the schools under teachers of earlier with those under teachers of more recent training, this healthful progress is very striking. The older style of teachers are generally found in the older schools ; and to these must be allowed the merit which they claim of having been among the first to explore this now well-trodden path of Christian duty. Though deeply sympathising with the earnestness and originality of a few of these, it has nevertheless become my conviction that little beyond this merit can generally be allowed to them ; nor is it surprising that desultory individual efforts should be outstripped in the lapse of the 20 years which has occurred since the first infant schools were established in this country, by the combined exertions of gifted and faithful minds, such as have co-operated to form and to maintain the Home and Colonial Infant School Society, foremost among whom was the late Dr. Mayo.<sup>1)</sup>

Previous and even subsequent to the date of its formation, some of the promoters of infant schools appear to have considered them merely as asylums for healthful amusement, under some degree of discipline and moral control—a purpose which is in no wise sacrificed in the more modern schools. Others seem to have thought they presented opportunities likewise for mental development, and some processes of learning to read and “count” were introduced from the plans of Bell and Lancaster, never calculated for infants ; while others, again, struck with the inappropriateness of these means, alone, to implant seeds which might be blessed to bring forth a vital religion, early made oral instruction from the Scriptures a part of their plan. This, though made so predominant as almost to supersede the purposes first contemplated, was yet carried out so crudely that I still see

[<sup>1</sup> Founded in 1836 to extend Pestalozzi's principles to the education of the poor. See D. Salmon and W. Hindshaw, *Infant Schools: Their History and Theory*, p. 82.]

many traces of its having often and grievously failed, through employing scarcely any other faculty than the memory, and exercising it almost exclusively upon words, without educating the infant mind to the remotest conception of their meaning.

The most fatal error was, however, the leaven of intellectual display which, whatever the subjects for its exercise, appears to have crept into a good many of these establishments of earlier foundation. It seems to have produced in some of them what we do not know how to designate otherwise than as the "prodigy system," under which the quicker children were to be wonders of envy and admiration to the rest, and the whole school in which they were exhibited "one of admiration, if not of envy, to its friends and neighbours, on occasion of each "examination," which might more truly have been designated a little "drama," in which the cleverer children had each their little part of "representation" by rote. Conceit, envy, and fretfulness, ill restrained by fear, were the leading moral elements of such a system; and stultifying verbal repetition, its chief intellectual exercise. Travesties of the language of science vied with desecrations of that of Scripture, and the world of truth was shut out by a veil of familiarity with its unvivified formulæ. Redeemed as this has always been, in some degree, by cheerful tunes and healthful play, it is possible to contemplate it with forbearance, even in the past, only as a first unsteady step in search of a right path. Happily its prints are fast disappearing; and the higher views which are being made national by the labours of the Home and Colonial Infant School Society, met by the good sense of local committees in general, and the devoted exertions of a few individuals in particular, have opened up an entirely new career, in which infant education cannot fail to be widely extended and greatly improved.

The *theory* of all the modern infant schools which I have visited appears to contemplate an education at once physical, intellectual, industrial, moral and religious. The occupations of each child, of whatever age, on every day of its attendance, are more or less directed into all these channels. . . . In fact, to implant good *habits* of body, heart, and mind, which, under these blessings, shall grow with their growth and strengthen with their

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strength, is the largest part of the work undertaken by the best infant schools for those portions of our juvenile population who more particularly need such asylums ; and to make them effective to their purpose, both thought and money have, in many instances, been liberally expended.

Mr. Fletcher, in addition to formulating the general principles, discusses individually the various subjects of infant-room practice, and presents a table showing the sex and training of the responsible teacher. From this table it appears that of the 41 schools under review 11 were in charge of males, 28 of females, of whom 2 only were untrained, and the headships of two schools were vacant. Female infant teachers are thus evidently supplanting male infant teachers, largely because of "the unvarying element of cheapness in the employment of females." The argument for training he puts thus : "I ought to state that conceit prevails among the teachers in inverse ratio to the amount of training they have received. The more ignorant they are of the real nature of the duties and responsibilities which devolve upon them, the more self-satisfied are they in the pursuit of the accustomed technical routine."

Mr. Bowstead, Mr. Fletcher's successor, makes special mention of Infant Schools in his first Report<sup>1</sup> :

The infant schools upon my list form less than one eighth of the whole number visited during the year, and I regret to find many otherwise admirable educational establishments still wanting this important accompaniment. When it is considered in how many points of view infant schools appear to have the advantage over those for older children ; how easily made, and yet how lasting, early impressions often are ; how many of our elementary notions of things have had their foundations laid

<sup>1</sup> Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education for 1853-4, pp. 1088-9.

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in merest childhood ; what a blessing it is to those of tender years to be shielded from evil from the first, and to have nothing to unlearn ; how important it is to obtain for the teacher constant and uninterrupted access to the mind which he is endeavouring to mould ; and how much less difficult it must be to secure regularity of attendance in the case of infants, when school is not only a benefit to the child but also a relief to the parent, than on the part of children who are old enough to render some useful service at home ; it seems difficult to account for the apathy existing upon this subject. Perhaps the explanation is to be found in the manner in which infant schools have too often been conducted. So long as they were regarded merely as places where children, assumed to be too young to benefit by instruction, were amused and kept safe from harm—as institutions which might claim, perhaps, the negative merit of preventing mischief, but certainly had no pretensions to be regarded as conferring positive benefit—it was natural that they should excite only secondary interest. But this idea of an infant school, which was general some years ago, is rapidly passing away ; and many institutions of the kind may now be met with which prove by the results of their teaching that the four years of a child's life preceding the age of seven are not much, if at all, less valuable in an educational point of view than the four which succeed. There are infant schools in my district in which the upper classes, consisting entirely of children under seven, read the New Testament or a simple secular book fluently and intelligently, write on a slate a fair round hand, know many of the simpler properties and relations of numbers, set down on a slate any number under 100,000 correctly from dictation, are acquainted with the main features of the earth's surface and of English geography, have definite notions of all ordinary forms, and possess an appreciable amount of exact information on natural history and objects of general utility. In addition to these mental attainments they have acquired habits of obedience, attention and observation, facility of comprehension, and a general moral culture, which distinguishes them at a glance from untrained children of the same class and age. These results are attainable in every infant school by proper methods, and it would be difficult to over-

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estimate their value in the case of children who are destined to complete their school education and enter upon the labour of their lives at the early age of ten or eleven.

During this period the Committee of Council was coming to recognise that in addition to subsidising the erection of school buildings and of schoolmasters' residences, and to allocating grants for equipment, efforts must be made to secure properly qualified teachers; accordingly, in the *Minute* of August 25, 1846, it was proposed to augment the schoolmaster's salary by awarding payment for training pupil teachers and to apportion small gratuities to deserving schoolmasters; retiring pensions were also mentioned. Exhibitions were offered to pupil teachers to encourage them to proceed to training colleges as Queen's Scholars. To secure an adequate supply of teachers the *Minute* of August 20, 1853, instituted a class of registered, as distinguished from certificated, teachers, and prescribed for the former an examination in :

1. The Holy Scriptures, the Catechism and the Liturgy of the Church of England (in schools connected with the Church of England).
  2. English history.
  3. Geography.
  4. Arithmetic (including vulgar and decimal fractions).
  5. English grammar and composition.
  6. The theory and practice of teaching.
- The object of the examination, it was added, was to ascertain sound, if humble, attainment. This examination was made to serve for the certification of Female Teachers for Infant Schools under *Minute* of April 29, 1854, which *Minute*, as it forms a landmark in the development of infant

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education, and at the same time defines the upper limit of an Infant School, deserves to be quoted almost in full :

Their Lordships had under consideration the means of encouraging the special preparation of female teachers for infant schools, without thereby lowering the standard of attainment hitherto required from candidates for the office of teacher in girls' schools, or inducing the authorities of the training schools under inspection to present those students principally for examination as teachers of infants who may appear to be the worst qualified to pass the examination prescribed for teachers of girls.

*Resolved,—*

1. That no training school be admitted to the benefit of this Minute until Her Majesty's Inspector shall have reported, and their Lordships shall be satisfied, that it provides a separate and complete course of training for females intended to take charge of infant schools.
2. That students who have completed not less than one year's course of study in the infant department of any such training school be allowed to attend at the Easter examinations for the registration of teachers, and to work the papers (with a special exercise on the management of infant schools) proposed thereat, pursuant to section 13 in the Minute of the 20th of August, 1853.
3. That the papers worked by such students be referred to the inspector who is charged with inspecting the given training school.
4. That such inspector, as shortly after the examination as possible, be instructed to attend the training school for the purpose of reporting upon the practical ability of each candidate (whose papers have been judged to be satisfactory) in teaching and managing a portion of the model infant school. He will also (at his discretion) examine each candidate orally, with special reference to the instruction of infants, in any of the subjects comprised in the written examination. He will also hear the candidate speak, and will note the correctness of her language in addressing children.
5. That after consideration of the Report of Her Majesty's

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Inspector, the candidates (who appear to their Lordships to be qualified) be passed for service in infant schools only, and that grants be allowed on their account according to the following scale :

CANDIDATES EXAMINED AS TEACHERS IN INFANT SCHOOLS AFTER NOT LESS THAN ONE YEAR'S TRAINING

| Grants  | First Class   | Second Class  |
|---|---|---|
| To the College . . . . .  | £35 . . . . .   | £10 . . . . .   |
| To the Candidate while engaged in an infant school (only) under inspection. | Augmentation; pursuant to section 11, in the Minute of 20 August 1853 | £8; and infant school under her charge may receive capitation grant pursuant to Minute of 2 April 1853. |

Candidates admitted to the first class must (in addition to high merits in the peculiar qualifications of an infant school teacher) pass the written examination with credit. They will be allowed to receive pupil teachers; but candidates in the second class will not be allowed to do so.

6. That no school be treated as an infant school in which there are children on the books of more than seven years old, or in which the instruction shall not be reported by Her Majesty's Inspector to be specially and exclusively adapted to children under that age.

Even training and certification did not suffice, and in his *General Report for 1854* the Rev. M. Mitchell essays the task<sup>1</sup> of defining an infant teacher :

To make a good infants' mistress, first-rate accomplishments are necessary, but they are personal rather than acquired, though they may be greatly improved (as what may not?) by an acquaintance with what has been learned by experience. It is, however, not so much learning as "tact" that makes an infant school

<sup>1</sup> Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education for 1854-5, pp. 472-3.

teacher. A wide, an extensive, a deep knowledge of human nature, of human passions, of human ways of thought, of secret and silent influences, of home, custom, and association ; a power to read the unread and apparently unknown page of the human heart ; an instinctive knowledge of what is to succeed some certain expression of a child's thought or act, of *what has preceded it*,—a knowledge founded on observation of children's character, which can tell a child's thought by the quiver of a muscle, the compression of a lip, the turn of a head, the twitch of a nerve, which has studied, in the form of a brain or the development of the physique, certain mental bearings and influences sure to be at work, and silently either to be called out into action or repressed, and the proper conduct of which leads the future man or woman to all that we praise as virtue, or detest as vice ; such should be the knowledge of an infant teacher ; and yet for such knowledge we are content to substitute that of a weak, unskilled, almost unweaned girl of 16, who has no range beyond her mother's cottage door, and we hope that success may attend our choice.

In the following year's *Report*<sup>1</sup> he again formulates his criteria for the rating of infant teachers, reiterating the view which has only too long persisted, that infant teaching posts are consolation prizes for the unintelligent :

If an infant-mistress has learnt to write fairly and read well, the first four rules of arithmetic, and ordinary geography, and has a fair amount of Scriptural knowledge, with a power of illustration by drawing, her intellectual education is sufficient ; but this education she should acquire before she attends the training school ; there her attention should be chiefly directed to the practical duties of her work, to improving her study of children's thoughts and actions, to ways of developing their intellects, to learning their different pastimes and means whereby the attention of children is excited and maintained, to learning, whether by note or ear or instrument, the melodies and songs of childhood, to some study of the nature of the diseases to which

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 402-3.

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very young children are subject, and to such sanitary matters as mothers of the upper classes know well, but of which too often the poorer classes are entirely ignorant. A healthy frame, a good voice, a kindly firm disposition, a graceful air, a pleasing manner, tidiness of person, and sound common sense, are the necessary qualifications of one undertaking this task.

By a *Minute* of April 24, 1857, Queen's scholarships of the second class were offered in the infant department of training colleges to pupil teachers who had been apprenticed to, and had satisfactorily completed their apprenticeship under, mistresses of Infant Schools, and to a limited number of other candidates who had completed the eighteenth year of their age, and satisfied Her Majesty's Inspector that their manners and address were *prima facie* suitable for dealing with very young children.

About this time the infiltration of Fröbel's ideas into England began. In his 1854 *Report* the Rev. M. Mitchell wrote<sup>1</sup>:

Having this experience of infant schools, and this sense of what they ought to be, it was with undisguised pleasure that I hailed the commencement of what I hope may prove to be a new era for our infant life—the introduction into this country of a plan successful in Saxony, which owes its origin to Herr Fröbel, and was among the few novelties of the Educational Exhibition of last year. Herr Hoffman brought with him his simple apparatus; and his own pleasing manner of displaying it ensured a success which its merits, great as they are, might not have been equal to secure. This system, though intellectual, is truly infantile; it treats the child as a child; encourages it to think for itself; teaches it, by childish toys and methods, gradually to develop in action or hieroglyphic writing its own idea, to tell its own story, and to listen to that of others. There is

<sup>1</sup> Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education for 1854-5, pp. 473-4.

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no use of hard names, no singing of "perpendicular" or "horizontal," but whatever is said, and whatever is done, is totally and altogether such as belongs to a child. The grand feature of the system is "occupation." The child is taught little; it simply produces for itself. It has toys given to it of the simplest sort; straight bits of stick, or peas soaked in water. It is shown how to use them and becomes an architect and an inventor. Churches, towers, houses, and mechanical adaptations swarm from the newly acquired power. Again, with cubes of wood, the ideas of the child take a more solid form; it learns the weight, number, and size of articles, adapts them to their places, and fits them together, weaves with strips of coloured paper webs of varied beauty and certain significances of form, pricks out patterns with a needle, and even cuts clay and models it, and tells some stories of its life, as the old Egyptians,—those infants of an infant world,—might have done thousands of years ago, stories which the parent loves to read. Combined with such occupations are songs and games, the downy beds of sweet repose. The chief improvement is that the child learns everything itself, that there is no forcing of its mind, that when tired it leaves off its labour, and, having rested awhile, returns to it with vigour, or proceeds to something else. All that is required is tact and patience in the teacher, the art of knowing when to speak and when to be silent, a pleasing person, a pleasing voice, and a great love of children. Enough has been said of this system to attract attention to it. To learn more the student must go often to visit an establishment thus conducted.<sup>1</sup>

In his Report for the following year he returns to this topic, and enlarges upon his previous account, thus<sup>2</sup>

I mentioned last year the introduction of Froëdel's system of infant education into this country. A successful impetus has

<sup>1</sup> A footnote adds: "A school on this system is ably conducted by Madame Ronge, of 32 Tavistock Place. This school may be visited on Tuesdays, from 11 to 1 o'clock; and classes are formed for the instruction of governesses and nurses."

<sup>2</sup> Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education for 1855-6, p. 402.

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been given in that direction by one of the first writers of the day ; and, the publication of a book relating to the system having been accomplished, the means of applying it to infant schools generally are now afforded. My own opinion of its merits remains unaltered ; and having seen it at work in the infant school of St. Mark's, Lakenham, under an intelligent mistress, I venture to predict that it will, where known, extensively prevail. It is only necessary to say that its main principle is to " draw out the mind of the child."

About this time,<sup>1</sup> too, Comenius's *The School of Infancy* was translated into English.

The times seemed propitious and conditions were evidently conspiring to reinvigorate the Infant School movement, but the omens were deceptive. The grant for education, which in 1839 amounted to £30,000, had in 1858 reached the figure of £663,000, and it was evident that if the same basis of payment was maintained it would mount still more rapidly ; in 1859 it actually reached £836,000, and Dr. Temple declared before the Newcastle Commission that its tendency was, by constant relaxation of the conditions, to attain the enormous sum of £5,000,000. Complaints were also heard that the instruction given in the schools was both too ambitious and too superficial in its character, that it was too exclusively adapted to the older pupils to the neglect of the younger ones, and that it often omitted to secure a thorough grounding in the simplest but most essential parts of instruction. Action had to be taken, and a Commission was appointed on June 30, 1858, under the chairmanship of the Duke of Newcastle to "Inquire into the present state of Popular Education in England and to consider and report what Measures, if any,

<sup>1</sup> In 1858.

are required for the extension of sound and cheap elementary instruction to "all classes of the People."

Considering the strictures passed on the education provided by the ordinary day school, we are surprised at the favourable attitude of the Newcastle Commissioners to Infant Schools. They condemn outright the dames' schools, and cite appreciatively the descriptions of Infant Schools in the earlier *Minutes of the Committee of the Council on Education*.<sup>1</sup> They quote evidence of ministers of religion, of schoolmasters, and even of the police regarding the advantages of Infant Schools.<sup>2</sup> We may not admire their motives—that "children under seven can earn little or nothing"; that "infant schools are comparatively cheap as they are usually taught by mistresses"; "that the difficulties produced by differences of religious belief can hardly arise in respect of such infant schools." Notwithstanding, we welcome the pronouncement<sup>3</sup>

that infant schools form a most important part of the machinery required for a national system of education, inasmuch as they lay the foundation, in some degree, of knowledge, and in a still greater degree, of habits which are essential to education, while without them a child may contract habits and sustain injuries which the best school will afterwards be unable to correct and remedy.

The Commissioners, while expressing the expectation that the supply from the existing training colleges would soon overtake the demand for other types of teachers, declared<sup>4</sup> of mistresses of Infant Schools: "The demand

<sup>1</sup> See above, pp. 168-71; 171-3.

<sup>2</sup> Report of Commissioners appointed to Inquire into the State of Popular Education in England, 1861, vol. I, p. 31.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 32.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 169.

## THE STATE AND INFANT SCHOOLS

for them is great, and we trust that it will be much greater. The supply is insufficient, and does not seem likely to increase unless the Committee of Council will extend its powerful aid."

With the best intentions, to secure that children attending day schools should obtain a mastery of the indispensable elements of knowledge, reading, writing, and the primary rules of arithmetic, the Commissioners recommended payment by results of examination. They nevertheless proposed to exempt<sup>1</sup> scholars under seven, the amount of grant for such to be determined by the average number of children in daily attendance; they also expressed the hope<sup>2</sup> that the payment by results "should be done in such a way as not to lower the general standard of elementary instruction to this its lowest level of usefulness."

Their expectations were nevertheless sadly disappointed. The preamble to the first issue of the *Revised Code*<sup>3</sup> declared that

Their Lordships being desirous to render the distribution of the Parliamentary grant for public education in Great Britain more simple, more general, and more effective for its purpose,

<sup>1</sup> Report of Commissioners appointed to Inquire into the State of Popular Education in England, 1861, vol. I, p. 330.      <sup>2</sup> Ibid., vol. I, p. 296.

<sup>3</sup> A Code was issued in 1860 embodying and organising under chapter headings the Minutes of the Committee of Council of Education—Copy of Minutes and Regulations of the Committee of the Privy Council on Education, reduced to the Form of a Code. Ordered, by the House of Commons, to be Printed. 27 April 1860. House of Commons Paper, No. 252, Session 1860.

The Revised Code was ordered to be Printed August 6, 1861, its title being Minute of the Committee of the Privy Council on Education establishing a Revised Code of Regulations.

An amended Revised Code was issued in 1862: Minute by the Right Honourable the Lords of the Privy Council on Education establishing a Revised Code of Regulations. Reprinted with proposed alterations, and marked to show which Articles are retained from the Code of 1860.

after having considered the Report of the Commissioners appointed by Warrant under the Queen's Sign Manual on 30 June 1858 to inquire into the present state of popular education in England Resolved, To Revise the Code of Minutes and Regulations under which the grant is now distributed, and to adopt the following means of substituting the Revised Code for that at present in force.

The chief means was payment by results of examinations. Chapter iii deals with "Grants to Maintain Schools," and Art. 40 reads :

The managers of schools may claim per scholar 1*d.* for every attendance, after the first 100, at the morning or afternoon meetings. . . . One third part of the sum thus claimable is forfeited if the scholar fails to satisfy the inspector in reading, one third if in writing, one third if in arithmetic respectively, according to Article 44.

Art. 43 divides pupils of the Elementary Schools into four groups : Group I is confined to children between 3 and 7 years of age ; Group II to children between 7 and 9 ; Group III between 9 and 11 ; and Group IV to children of 11 and upwards. Art. 44 sets forth the requirements for each group : for Group I : Reading—Narrative in mono-syllables. Writing—Form on blackboard or slate, from dictation, letters, capital and small, manuscript. Arithmetic—Form on blackboard or slate, from dictation, figures up to 20 ; name at sight figures up to 20 ; add and subtract figures up to 10, orally, from example on black-board. This implied<sup>2</sup> that all pupils, including those between 3 and 7, were to be examined individually each year. The Minute issued in 1862 amending the first issue of the Revised Code added in Article 43 : "Children under 6 years of age, in those schools of which the inspector is

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able to report that special provision is made for the instruction of infants, are not required to be individually examined. But the grants of 1*d.* per attendance do not begin to be made until after the first 200 attendances." Had this exemption from individual examination been allowed to all children in Group I, i.e. all children from 3 to 7 years of age,<sup>1</sup> the Infant School might have been saved, but the *Revised Code*, by fixing the age at 6, disrupted the Infant School and sounded the death-knell of infant education. Infant education was prejudiced, 'not merely by the natural tendency of teachers to concentrate on the pupils whose grant earning depended on passing the examination in reading, writing and arithmetic,'<sup>2</sup> but also by the express injunction that the instruction of infant pupils was not to interfere with the instruction of older pupils.

Just as the introduction into Britain of Pestalozzi's principles encountered the Bell and Lancaster monitorial systems, so the Kindergarten of Fröbel encountered the payment-by-results doctrine. Ill fortune thus seemed to dog the steps of infant education development.

In consequence of the passing of the Elementary Education Act, which received the Royal Assent on August 9, 1870, a new *Code* was issued on February 7, 1871, and came into force in May of the same year. In it we find the "Education Department" reverting to the conception of

<sup>1</sup> The Newcastle Commissioners had recommended that scholars under 7 should be exempt from examination.

<sup>2</sup> The amended form of payment was 4*s.* per scholar according to the average number in attendance throughout the year, and for every scholar who attended more than 200 morning or afternoon meetings of their school if under 6 years of age 6*s.* 6*d.*, and of more than 6 years of age 8*s.*, 2*s.* 8*d.* being forfeited for failure in each branch—reading, writing and arithmetic.

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infant education extending to the age of 7, for Art. 19 B reads :

For every scholar, present on the day of examination who has attended not less than 250 morning or afternoon meetings of the school

1. If above four, and under seven, years of age at the end of the year

(a) 8s.

(b) 10s. if the infants are taught as a separate department, in a room properly constructed and furnished for their instruction.

But the damage had been done, and the cloven hoof of individual examination still appeared in the "Instructions to Inspectors on the Examination of Children in Public Elementary Schools" issued on May 8, 1871 :

Infant Schools—The inspection and examination of infant schools will differ in some degree from the practice of past years ; but only in the fact that the children who would have been presented in Standard I (Revised Code, 1871) will now not be individually paid for, according to passes. The first class of children in the infant school ought, however, to be strictly examined, and if every fourth child is called out (or some convenient proportion), such children ought to be able to pass *at least* as much as individual children in that Standard.

The Royal Commission appointed in 1886 under the chairmanship of Sir Richard A. Cross "to inquire into the working of the Elementary Education Acts, England and Wales," condemned the "payment by results" method. The Commission reported in 1888, and in the "Revised Instructions issued to Her Majesty's Inspectors" on March 28, 1890,<sup>1</sup> we find the regulation regarding individual

<sup>1</sup> Report of the Committee of Council on Education, 1899-90, p. 174.

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examination relaxed and "sample and class examination" introduced :

The plan of examining in class or by sample which has been attended with great convenience in the First Standard of infant schools, and has certainly not exercised any injurious effect on the soundness of the instruction, will now be extended in all schools to the scholars of the First and Second Standards. It will also be extended to the higher classes, unless the managers express a wish that the scholars in those classes shall be individually examined.

The plan was completely abandoned by the "Revised Instructions" issued to inspectors on February 19, 1895,<sup>1</sup> in which it was stated :

It has been decided to extend to schools for older scholars the provision of the Code by which the annual examination has been allowed to be omitted in the case of infant schools and occasional visits of inspection have been substituted.

The wheel has thus come full circle, and the short-sighted, although unfortunately not short-lived, educational schemes of politicians are brought to naught. In no department of the public services does there appear to be greater ignorance of the past than in that of education, and it is to be hoped that the future development of Nursery Schools and of infant education will not be frustrated by reactionary politicians ignorant of the history of the subject and of the follies of their predecessors. Even in discouraging circumstances the infant teacher can turn for inspiration to the doctrines of the great exponents of infant education, and if these pages have made such doctrines more readily accessible, this work will have served its purpose.

<sup>1</sup> Report of the Committee of Council on Education, 1894-5, p. 406.

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